DC THE SINISTER HOUSE OF SECRET LOVE

THE SINISTER HOUSE OF SECRET LOVE

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A GRAPHIC TALE OF GOTHIC TERROR...

"KISS OF THE SERPENT"

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WHAT DO THESE CHAMPIONS HAVE IN COMMON...WITH YOU?

MR. OLYMPIA

Larry Scott, Mr. Olympia," was a 136-lb. skinny weakling. He wrote for my free information—just as you should—and now weighs 205 lbs. with 20-inch arms! One of the world's best-built men ever! **How about you?**

MR. UNIVERSE

Dave Draper, "Mr. America," once was a fat slob—weighing 255 lbs. Then he wrote for my free information and now weighs 235 lbs., 20½-inch arms, a 55" chest, 32" waist. A real champ! **Why wait? Rush!**

MR. UNIVERSE

Reg Lewis, "Mr. Universe," was kicked around because of being skinny, only 138-lbs., and weak. But he sent for free information, now weighs 205 lbs. and is a real champ! **Why not you!**

THEY ANSWERED A WEIDER AD—GAINED 3 INCHES TO THEIR ARMS —4 INCHES TO THEIR CHEST— IN 7 SHORT WEEKS! YOU TOO?

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A-C-T-I-O-N is the key to strength—make your first He-Man Decision N-O-W! Fill out the coupon right now, rush it to me, and in hours I will send you absolutely free—at my own expense—the exact same muscle building information I sent to these and numerous champions, and to over 5 million other successful students. I am known as the most successful trainer of champions. I have been turning weaklings into "Mr. America's" and "Mr. Universe's" successfully since 1936. Don't pass up this once-in-a-lifetime proven successful offer to trade in your body for the one you always dreamed of having. Remember, you will be following in the proven, safe, scientific footsteps of the World's Best Built Men. So hurry! Put an end to your weakness now. Send for my sensational free offer—good only to males between 13 and 75 in normal good health. This is the most time-tested, results-producing course of all time!

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- ☐ Broader Shoulders
- ☐ Athletic Legs
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- ☐ Lose Weight
- ☐ Magnetic Personality

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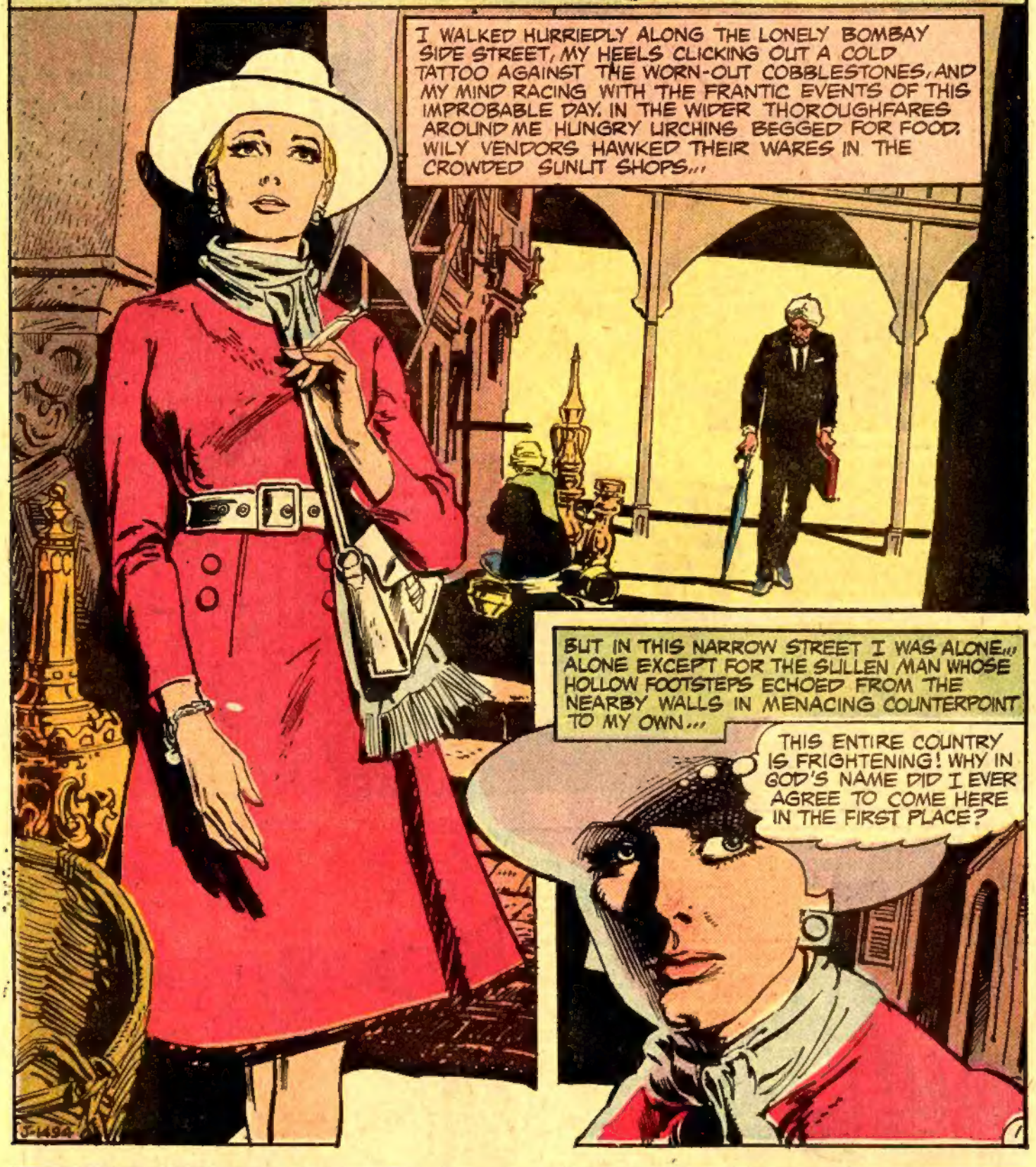
KISS OF THE SERPENT

PLOT: MARY DE ZUNIGA
DIALOGUE: MIKE FLEISHER

ART: TONY DE ZUNIGA



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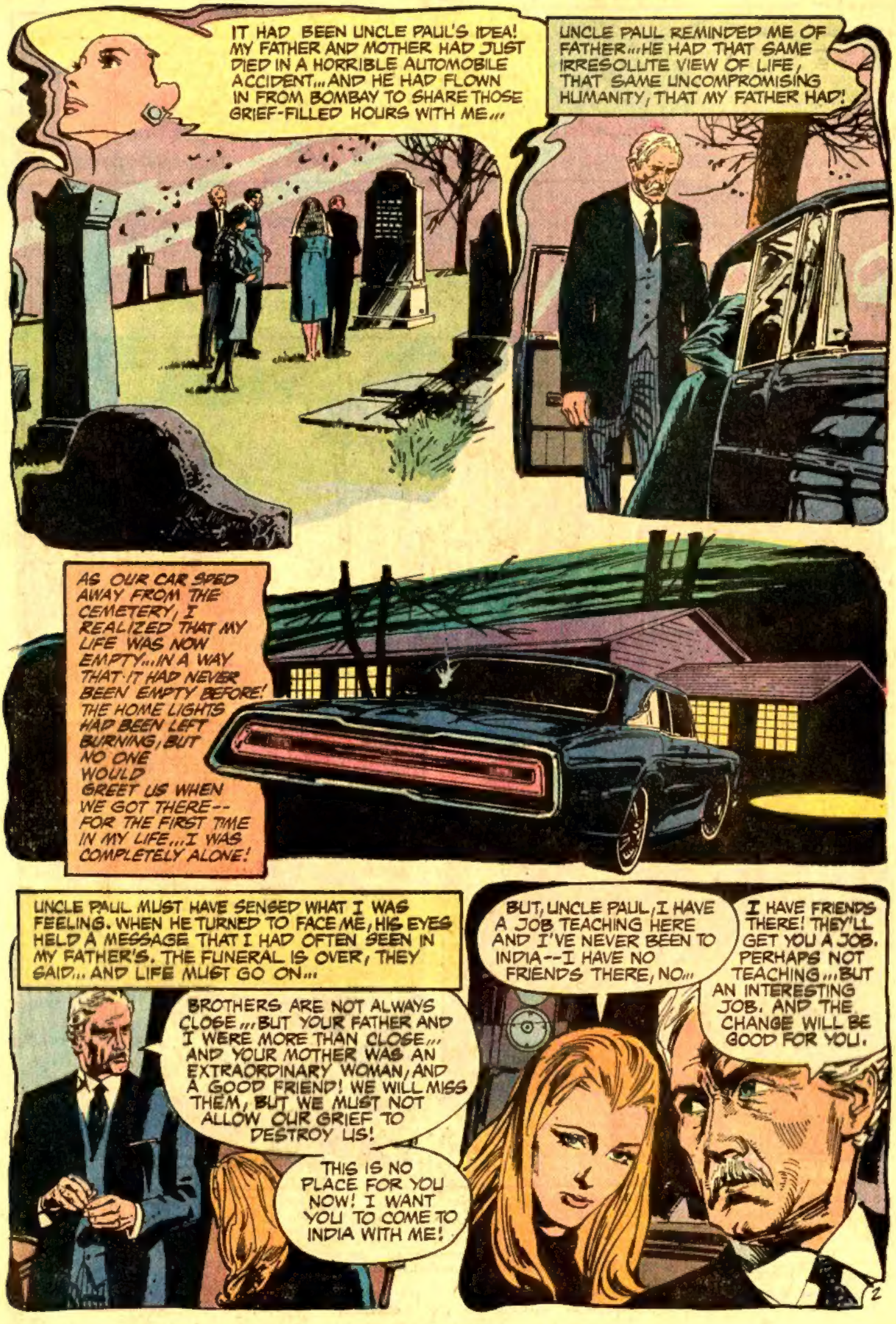
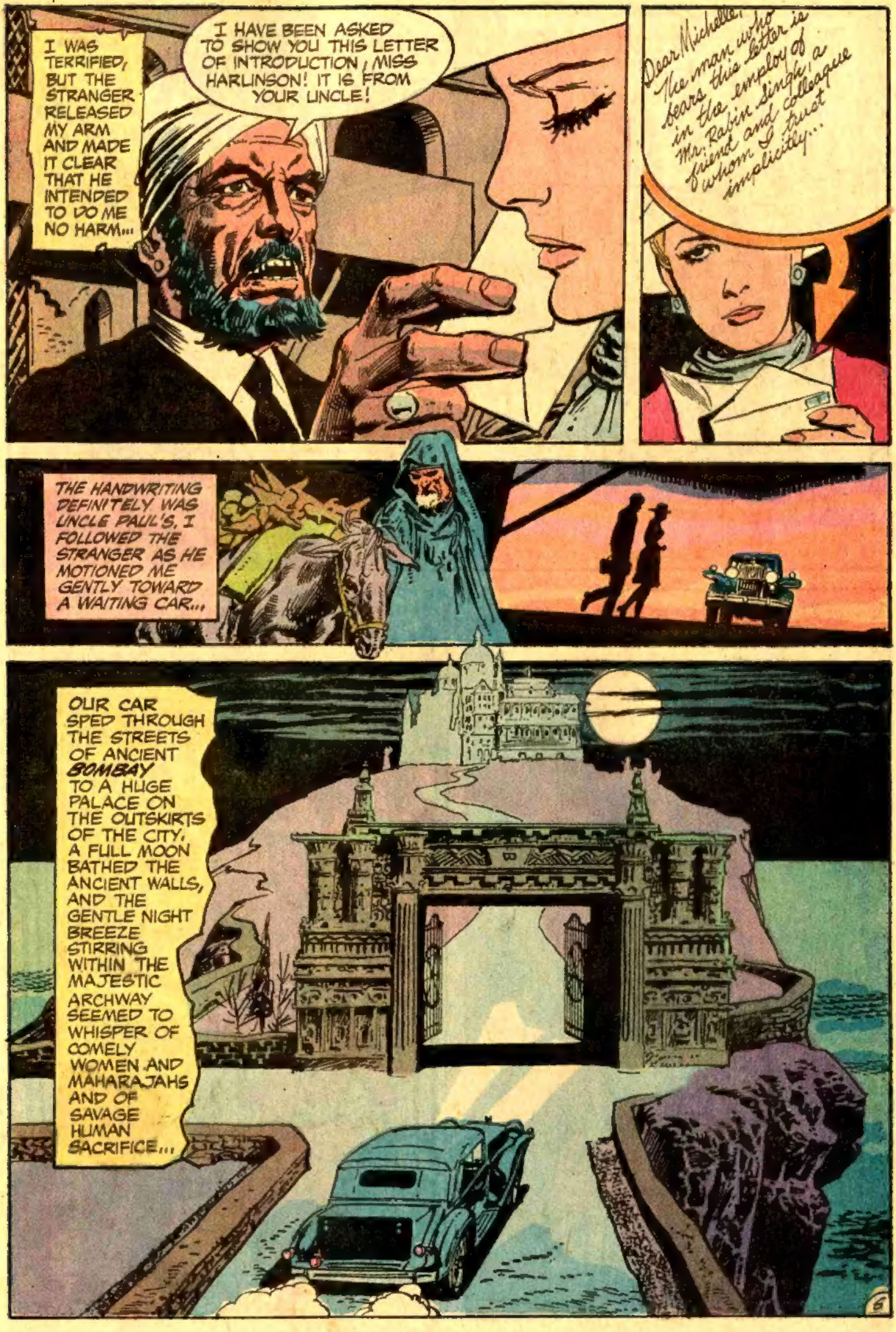
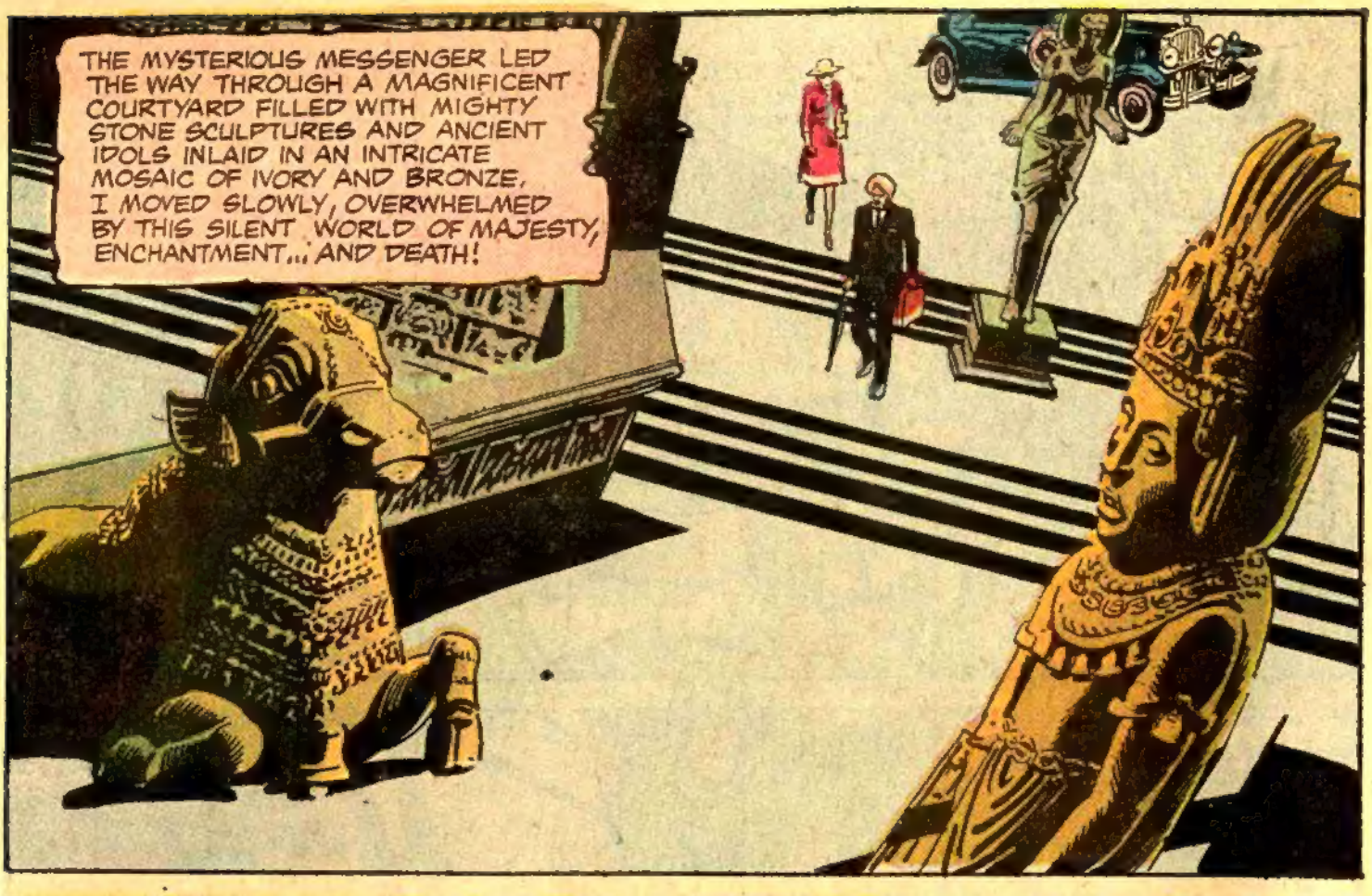

IT HAD BEEN UNCLE PAUL'S IDEA! MY FATHER AND MOTHER HAD JUST DIED IN A HORRIBLE AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENT... AND HE HAD FLOWN IN FROM BOMBAY TO SHARE THOSE GRIEF-FILLED HOURS WITH ME...
UNCLE PAUL REMINDED ME OF FATHER... HE HAD THAT SAME IRRESOLUTE VIEW OF LIFE, THAT SAME UNCOMPROMISING HUMANITY, THAT MY FATHER HAD!
AS OUR CAR SPED AWAY FROM THE CEMETERY, I REALIZED THAT MY LIFE WAS NOW EMPTY... IN A WAY THAT IT HAD NEVER BEEN EMPTY BEFORE! THE HOME LIGHTS HAD BEEN LEFT BURNING, BUT NO ONE WOULD GREET US WHEN WE GOT THERE-- FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE... I WAS COMPLETELY ALONE!
UNCLE PAUL MUST HAVE SENSED WHAT I WAS FEELING. WHEN HE TURNED TO FACE ME, HIS EYES HELD A MESSAGE THAT I HAD OFTEN SEEN IN MY FATHER'S. THE FUNERAL IS OVER, THEY SAID... AND LIFE MUST GO ON...
BROTHERS ARE NOT ALWAYS CLOSE... BUT YOUR FATHER AND I WERE MORE THAN CLOSE... AND YOUR MOTHER WAS AN EXTRAORDINARY WOMAN, AND A GOOD FRIEND! WE WILL MISS THEM, BUT WE MUST NOT ALLOW OUR GRIEF TO DESTROY US!
THIS IS NO PLACE FOR YOU NOW! I WANT YOU TO COME TO INDIA WITH ME!
BUT, UNCLE PAUL, I HAVE A JOB TEACHING HERE AND I'VE NEVER BEEN TO INDIA--I HAVE NO FRIENDS THERE, NO...
I HAVE FRIENDS THERE! THEY'LL GET YOU A JOB. PERHAPS NOT TEACHING... BUT AN INTERESTING JOB. AND THE CHANGE WILL BE GOOD FOR YOU.

AND SO... I HAD LEFT BEHIND THE ONLY LIFE I HAD EVER KNOWN... AND COME TO THIS UNREAL LAND WHERE EVERY SIGHT AND SOUND SEEMED MYSTERIOUS AND EXOTIC AND FOREBODING. UNCLE PAUL HAD FOUND ME A JOB WITH THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF AN ENGINEERING FIRM... AND I HAD LOCATED A PLEASANT APARTMENT OVERLOOKING THE BUSTLING CITY...
BUT NOW... I WAS BEING PURSUED. THE FOOTSTEPS BEHIND ME WOULD NOT FADE AWAY AND DISAPPEAR! I HOPED THAT I WOULD BE ABLE TO REACH THE SAFETY OF MY APARTMENT, A FEW STREETS AWAY...
HE'S STILL BEHIND ME... HIDING IN THE SHADOW OF THAT BUILDING! WHO IS HE? WHAT DOES HE WANT? WHY IN HEAVEN'S NAME IS HE FOLLOWING ME?
WHENEVER I STOPPED, HE STOPPED... WHENEVER I WALKED HE FOLLOWED! THIS HAD BEEN GOING ON ALL DAY, SINCE EARLY MORNING, WHEN I FIRST SET OUT FOR WORK...
WORK HADN'T EXACTLY BEEN A BED OF ROSES EITHER! FROM THE MOMENT I ARRIVED, I HAD SENSED THAT SOMETHING WAS WRONG... AND THEN...

WOULD YOU ALL COME IN FOR A MOMENT PLEASE! MR. CRENSHAW WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK TO YOU!
WE ALL FELL SILENT AS WE FILED INTO MR. CRENSHAW'S OFFICE! THERE HAD BEEN RUMORS, BUT NO ONE HAD ANTICIPATED MR. CRENSHAW'S STARTLING ANNOUNCEMENT...
I'M GOING TO COME DIRECTLY TO THE POINT! THE HOME OFFICE OF HAMMOND AND HAMMOND, OF WHICH WE ARE A SUBSIDIARY, HAS FILED FOR BANKCRUPTCY, AND THIS OFFICE WILL BE PERMANENTLY CLOSED!
THE COMPANY HAS NO FUNDS, EITHER TO PAY YOUR SALARIES OR TO PROVIDE YOU WITH PASSAGE HOME! IF ANY OF YOU WISH TO REMAIN IN BOMBAY, WE SHALL ENDEAVOR TO FIND YOU OTHER JOBS HERE!
THE CONCERNING LOSS OF MY JOB GAVE WAY TO SUDDEN TERROR WHEN I REALIZED THAT THE DARK STRANGER HAD SOMEHOW MANAGED TO CIRCLE AROUND IN FRONT OF ME, SO THAT I COULD NOT REACH MY APARTMENT WITHOUT MOVING DIRECTLY ACROSS HIS PATH...
PERHAPS HE HASN'T BEEN FOLLOWING ME... PERHAPS HE'S JUST...
THIS ANXIOUS HOPE, FLIMSY FROM THE FIRST, CRUMBLED COMPLETELY WHEN THE STRANGER SEIZED MY FOREARM...
PLEASE DO NOT CRY OUT, MISS HARLINSON!


I WAS TERRIFIED, BUT THE STRANGER RELEASED MY ARM AND MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE INTENDED TO DO ME NO HARM...
I HAVE BEEN ASKED TO SHOW YOU THIS LETTER OF INTRODUCTION, MISS HARLINSON! IT IS FROM YOUR UNCLE!
Dear Michelle, The man who bears this letter is in the employ of Mr. Rabin Singh, a friend and colleague whom I trust implicitly...
THE HANDWRITING DEFINITELY WAS UNCLE PAUL'S, I FOLLOWED THE STRANGER AS HE MOTIONED ME GENTLY TOWARD A WAITING CAR...
OUR CAR SPED THROUGH THE STREETS OF ANCIENT BOMBAY TO A HUGE PALACE ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CITY. A FULL MOON BATHED THE ANCIENT WALLS, AND THE GENTLE NIGHT BREEZE STIRRING WITHIN THE MAJESTIC ARCHWAY SEEMED TO WHISPER OF COMELY WOMEN AND MAHARAJAHS AND OF SAVAGE HUMAN SACRIFICE...
6


THE MYSTERIOUS MESSENGER LED THE WAY THROUGH A MAGNIFICENT COURTYARD FILLED WITH MIGHTY STONE SCULPTURES AND ANCIENT IDOLS INLAID IN AN INTRICATE MOSAIC OF IVORY AND BRONZE. I MOVED SLOWLY, OVERWHELMED BY THIS SILENT WORLD OF MAJESTY, ENCHANTMENT... AND DEATH!

THE COURTYARD GAVE WAY TO A HIGH VAULTED ARCHWAY--A STONE COLUMN TOWERED TOWARD THE HEAVENS LIKE AN IMPERTINENT TOWER OF BABEL...

WE PASSED THROUGH INCENSED HALLWAYS PAVED WITH ANCIENT TILE UNTIL FINALLY WE STOOD BEFORE A DOORWAY. SOME NERVOUS INSTINCT WAS WARNING ME TO FLEE--BEFORE IT WAS TOO LATE!
OUR JOURNEY IS AT AN END, MISS HARLINSON! MY MASTER AWAITS YOU IN HIS STUDY! GOOD DAY TO YOU!
CONTINUED ON 35th PAGE FOLLOWING.
6

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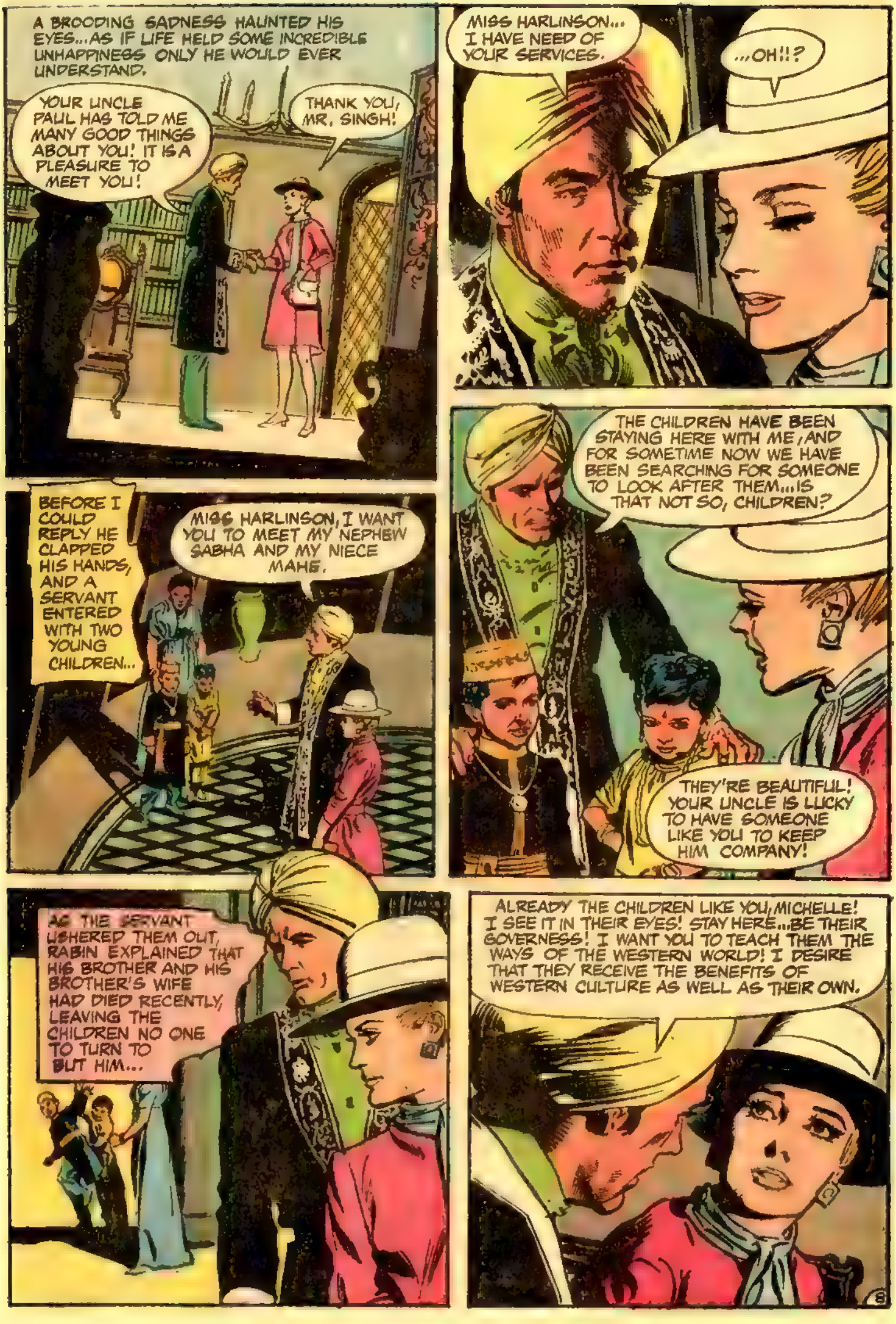
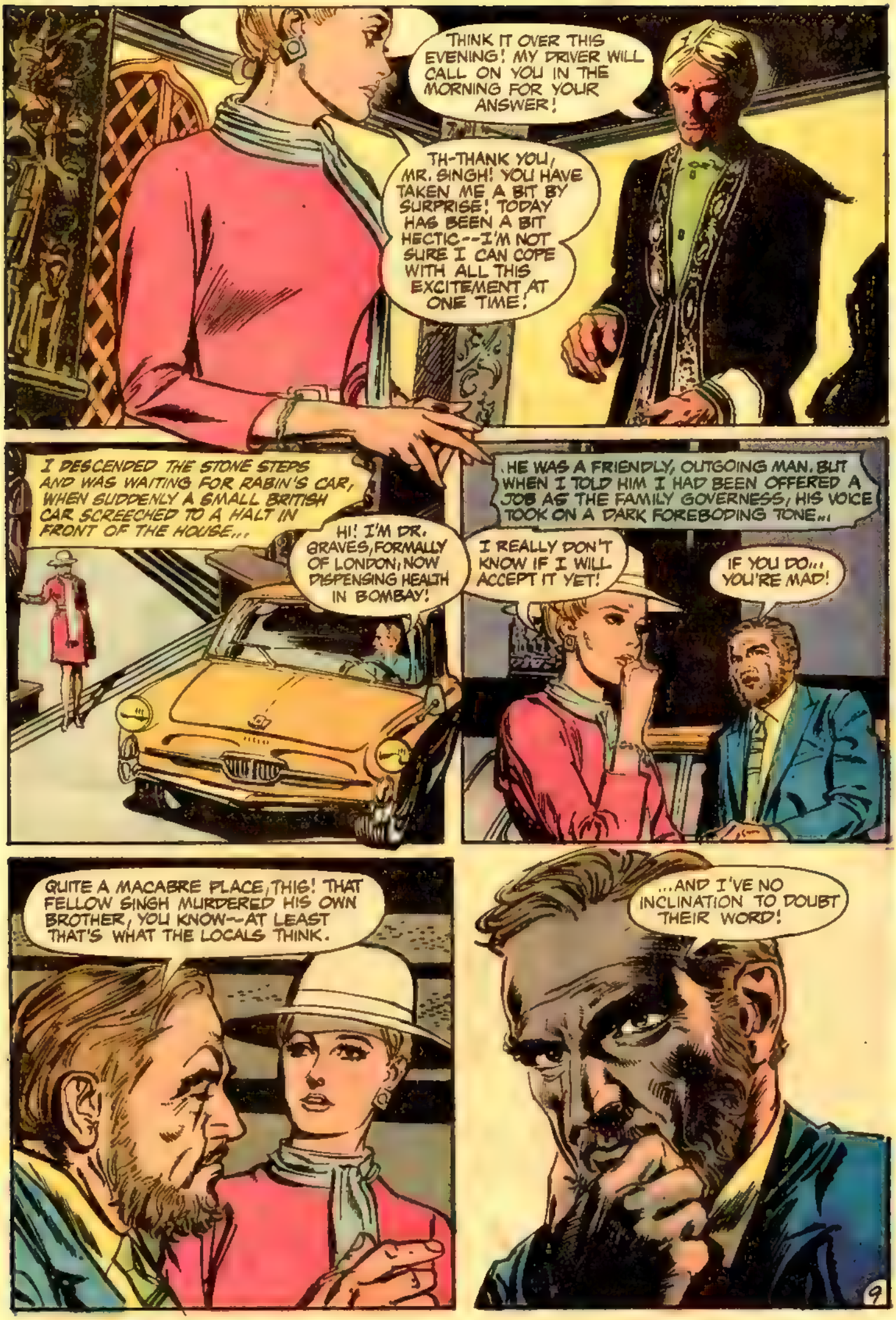
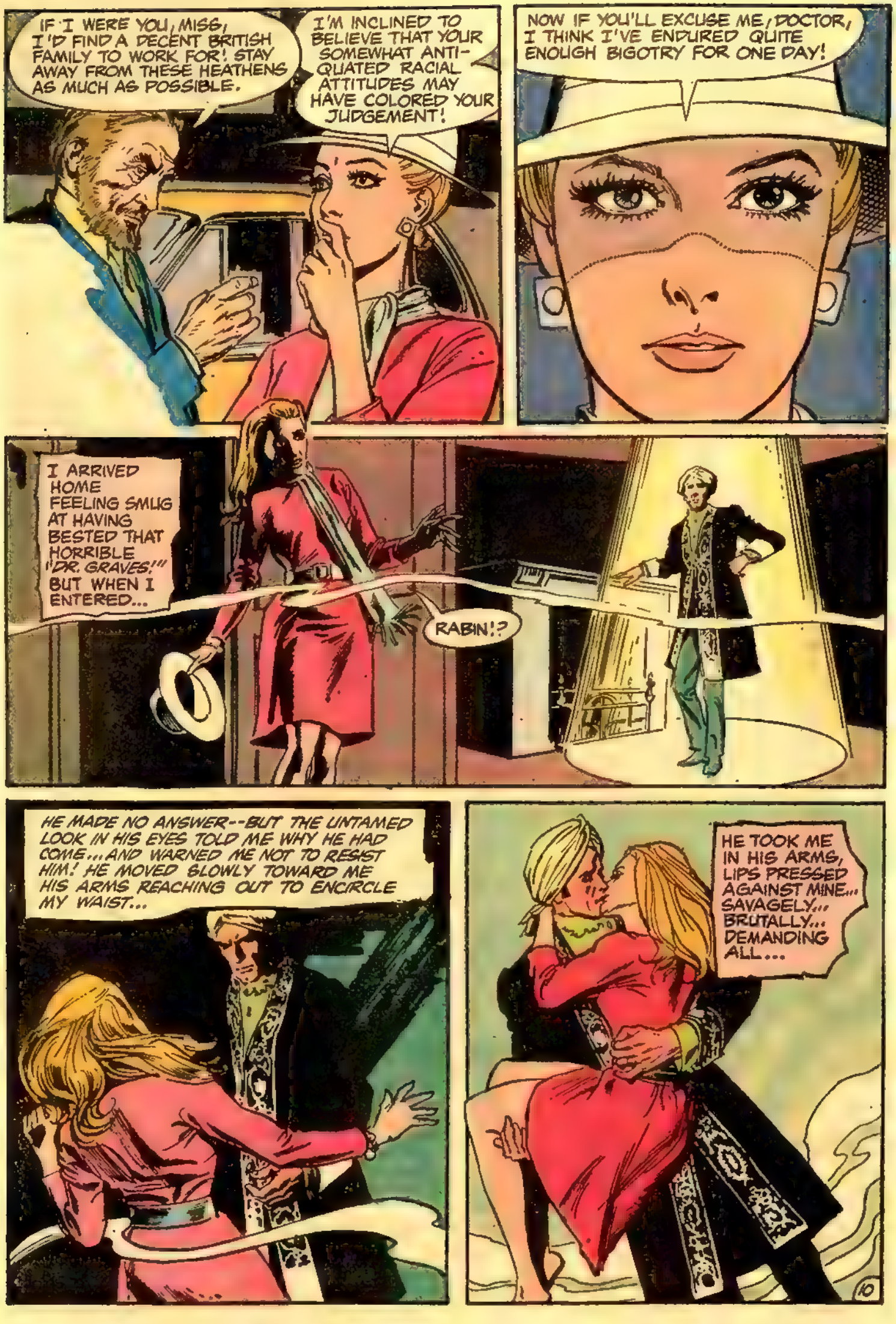
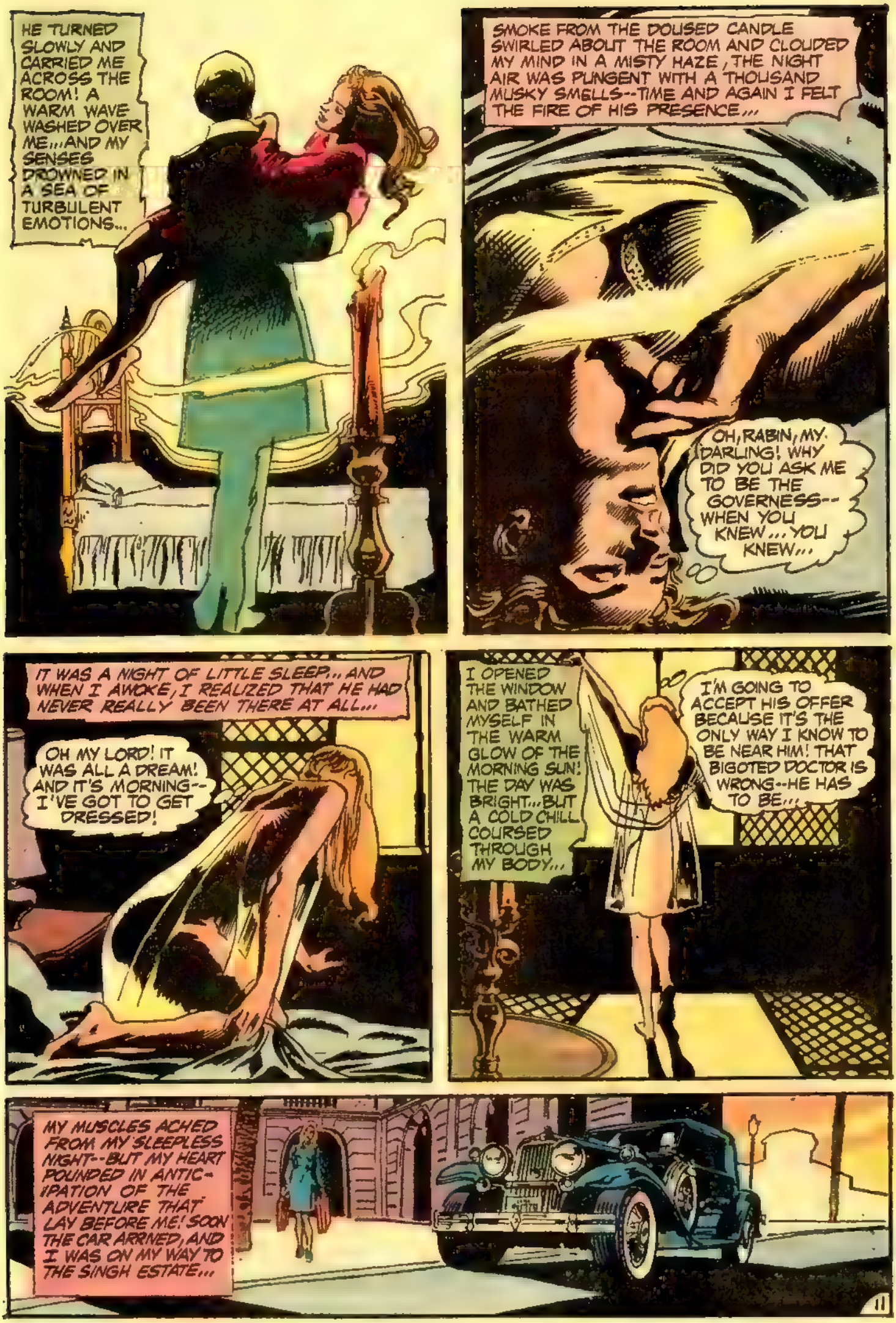
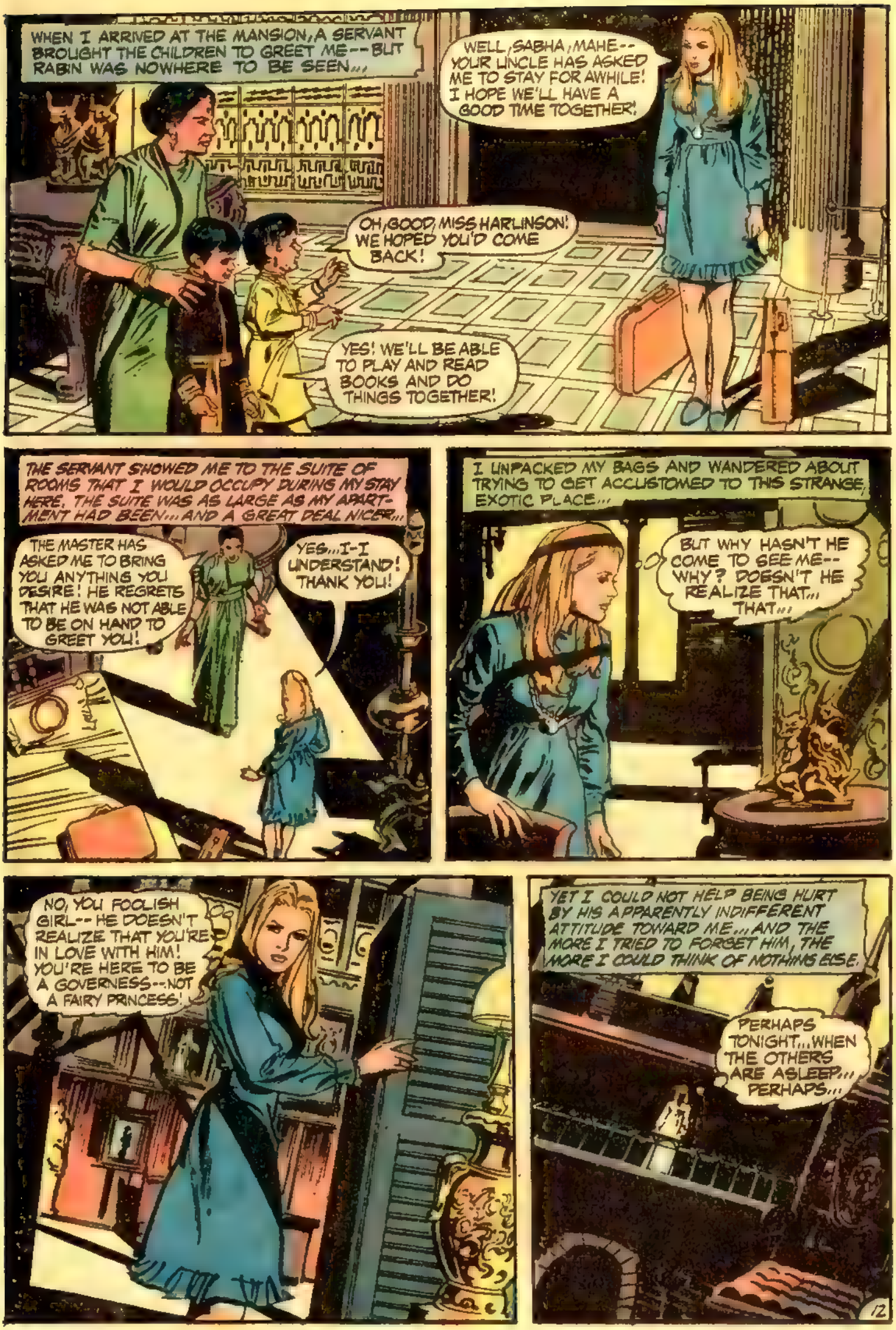

A BROODING SADNESS HAUNTED HIS EYES...AS IF LIFE HELD SOME INCREDIBLE UNHAPPINESS ONLY HE WOULD EVER UNDERSTAND.
YOUR UNCLE PAUL HAS TOLD ME MANY GOOD THINGS ABOUT YOU! IT IS A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU!
THANK YOU, MR. SINGH!
MISS HARLINSON... I HAVE NEED OF YOUR SERVICES.
...OH!!?
BEFORE I COULD REPLY HE CLAPPED HIS HANDS, AND A SERVANT ENTERED WITH TWO YOUNG CHILDREN...
MISS HARLINSON, I WANT YOU TO MEET MY NEPHEW SABHA AND MY NIECE MAHE.
THE CHILDREN HAVE BEEN STAYING HERE WITH ME, AND FOR SOMETIME NOW WE HAVE BEEN SEARCHING FOR SOMEONE TO LOOK AFTER THEM...IS THAT NOT SO, CHILDREN?
THEY'RE BEAUTIFUL! YOUR UNCLE IS LUCKY TO HAVE SOMEONE LIKE YOU TO KEEP HIM COMPANY!
AS THE SERVANT USHERED THEM OUT, RABIN EXPLAINED THAT HIS BROTHER AND HIS BROTHER'S WIFE HAD DIED RECENTLY, LEAVING THE CHILDREN NO ONE TO TURN TO BUT HIM...
ALREADY THE CHILDREN LIKE YOU, MICHELLE! I SEE IT IN THEIR EYES! STAY HERE...BE THEIR GOVERNESS! I WANT YOU TO TEACH THEM THE WAYS OF THE WESTERN WORLD! I DESIRE THAT THEY RECEIVE THE BENEFITS OF WESTERN CULTURE AS WELL AS THEIR OWN.
8

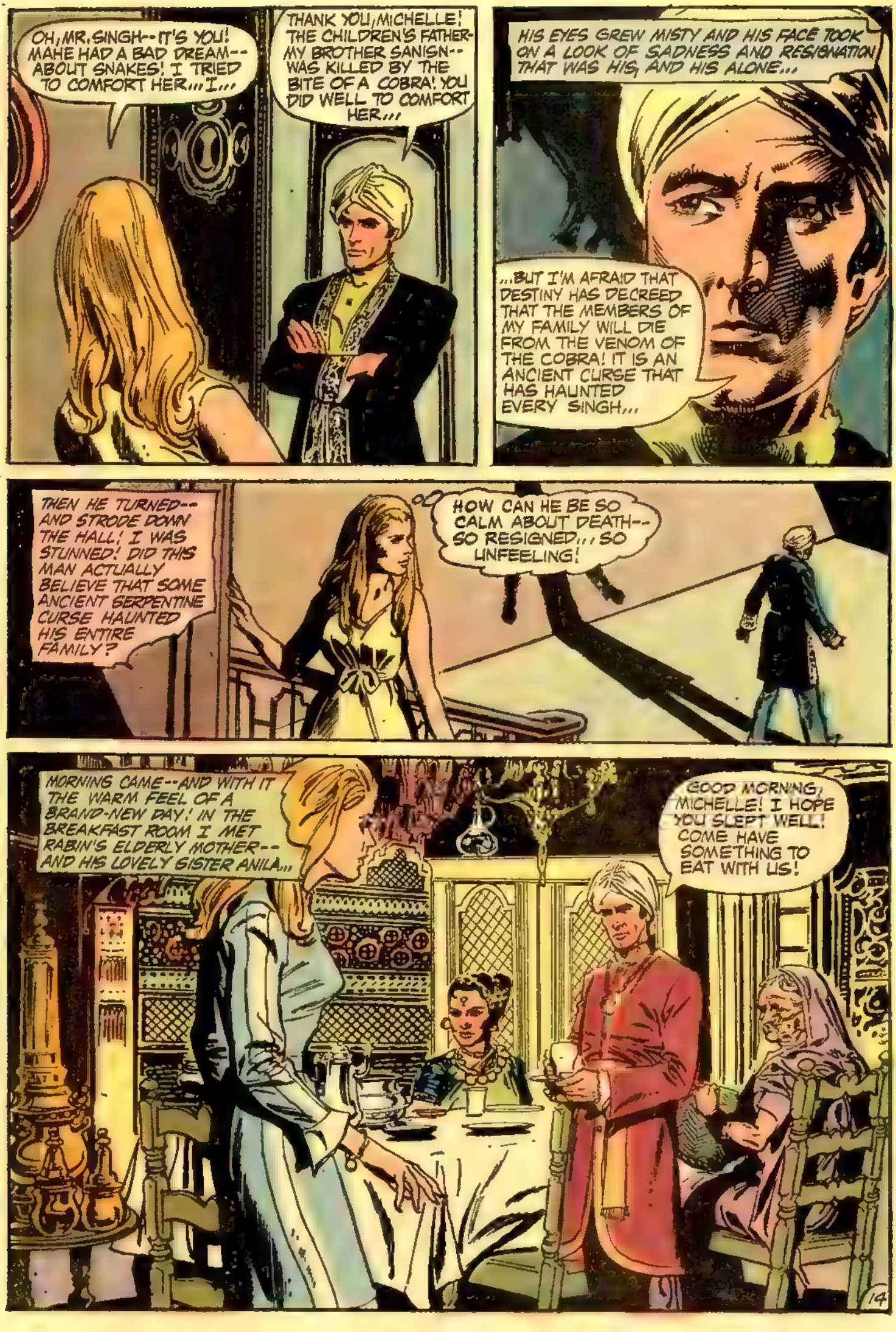

THINK IT OVER THIS EVENING! MY DRIVER WILL CALL ON YOU IN THE MORNING FOR YOUR ANSWER!
TH-THANK YOU, MR. SINGH! YOU HAVE TAKEN ME A BIT BY SURPRISE! TODAY HAS BEEN A BIT HECTIC--I'M NOT SURE I CAN COPE WITH ALL THIS EXCITEMENT AT ONE TIME!
I DESCENDED THE STONE STEPS AND WAS WAITING FOR RABIN'S CAR, WHEN SUDDENLY A SMALL BRITISH CAR SCREECHED TO A HALT IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE...
HI! I'M DR. GRAVES, FORMALLY OF LONDON; NOW DISPENSING HEALTH IN BOMBAY!
HE WAS A FRIENDLY, OUTGOING MAN. BUT WHEN I TOLD HIM I HAD BEEN OFFERED A JOB AS THE FAMILY GOVERNESS, HIS VOICE TOOK ON A DARK FOREBODING TONE...
I REALLY DON'T KNOW IF I WILL ACCEPT IT YET!
IF YOU DO... YOU'RE MAD!
QUITE A MACABRE PLACE, THIS! THAT FELLOW SINGH MURDERED HIS OWN BROTHER, YOU KNOW--AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT THE LOCALS THINK.
...AND I'VE NO INCLINATION TO DOUBT THEIR WORD!
9


IF I WERE YOU, MISS, I'D FIND A DECENT BRITISH FAMILY TO WORK FOR! STAY AWAY FROM THESE HEATHENS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.
I'M INCLINED TO BELIEVE THAT YOUR SOMEWHAT ANTI-QUATED RACIAL ATTITUDES MAY HAVE COLORED YOUR JUDGEMENT!
NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME, DOCTOR, I THINK I'VE ENDURED QUITE ENOUGH BIGOTRY FOR ONE DAY!
I ARRIVED HOME FEELING SMUG AT HAVING BESTED THAT HORRIBLE "DR. GRAVES!" BUT WHEN I ENTERED...
RABIN!?
HE MADE NO ANSWER--BUT THE UNTAMED LOOK IN HIS EYES TOLD ME WHY HE HAD COME... AND WARNED ME NOT TO RESIST HIM! HE MOVED SLOWLY TOWARD ME HIS ARMS REACHING OUT TO ENCIRCLE MY WAIST...
HE TOOK ME IN HIS ARMS, LIPS PRESSED AGAINST MINE... SAVAGELY... BRUTALLY... DEMANDING ALL...
10


HE TURNED SLOWLY AND CARRIED ME ACROSS THE ROOM! A WARM WAVE WASHED OVER ME...AND MY SENSES DROWNED IN A SEA OF TURBULENT EMOTIONS...
SMOKE FROM THE DOUSED CANDLE SWIRLED ABOUT THE ROOM AND CLOUDED MY MIND IN A MISTY HAZE, THE NIGHT AIR WAS PUNGENT WITH A THOUSAND MUSKY SMELLS--TIME AND AGAIN I FELT THE FIRE OF HIS PRESENCE...
OH, RABIN, MY DARLING! WHY DID YOU ASK ME TO BE THE GOVERNESS-- WHEN YOU KNEW... YOU KNEW...
IT WAS A NIGHT OF LITTLE SLEEP... AND WHEN I AWOKE, I REALIZED THAT HE HAD NEVER REALLY BEEN THERE AT ALL...
OH MY LORD! IT WAS ALL A DREAM! AND IT'S MORNING-- I'VE GOT TO GET DRESSED!
I OPENED THE WINDOW AND BATHED MYSELF IN THE WARM GLOW OF THE MORNING SUN! THE DAY WAS BRIGHT... BUT A COLD CHILL COURSED THROUGH MY BODY...
I'M GOING TO ACCEPT HIS OFFER BECAUSE IT'S THE ONLY WAY I KNOW TO BE NEAR HIM! THAT BIGOTED DOCTOR IS WRONG--HE HAS TO BE...
MY MUSCLES ACHED FROM MY SLEEPLESS NIGHT--BUT MY HEART POUNDED IN ANTICIPATION OF THE ADVENTURE THAT LAY BEFORE ME! SOON THE CAR ARRIVED, AND I WAS ON MY WAY TO THE SINGH ESTATE...


WHEN I ARRIVED AT THE MANSION, A SERVANT BROUGHT THE CHILDREN TO GREET ME--BUT RABIN WAS NOWHERE TO BE SEEN...
WELL, SABHA, MAHE--YOUR UNCLE HAS ASKED ME TO STAY FOR AWHILE! I HOPE WE'LL HAVE A GOOD TIME TOGETHER!
OH, GOOD, MISS HARLINSON! WE HOPED YOU'D COME BACK!
YES! WE'LL BE ABLE TO PLAY AND READ BOOKS AND DO THINGS TOGETHER!
THE SERVANT SHOWED ME TO THE SUITE OF ROOMS THAT I WOULD OCCUPY DURING MY STAY HERE. THE SUITE WAS AS LARGE AS MY APARTMENT HAD BEEN...AND A GREAT DEAL NICER...
THE MASTER HAS ASKED ME TO BRING YOU ANYTHING YOU DESIRE! HE REGRETS THAT HE WAS NOT ABLE TO BE ON HAND TO GREET YOU!
YES...I-I UNDERSTAND! THANK YOU!
I UNPACKED MY BAGS AND WANDERED ABOUT TRYING TO GET ACCUSTOMED TO THIS STRANGE, EXOTIC PLACE...
BUT WHY HASN'T HE COME TO SEE ME--WHY? DOESN'T HE REALIZE THAT... THAT...
NO, YOU FOOLISH GIRL--HE DOESN'T REALIZE THAT YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH HIM! YOU'RE HERE TO BE A GOVERNESS--NOT A FAIRY PRINCESS!
YET I COULD NOT HELP BEING HURT BY HIS APPARENTLY INDIFFERENT ATTITUDE TOWARD ME...AND THE MORE I TRIED TO FORGET HIM, THE MORE I COULD THINK OF NOTHING ELSE.
PERHAPS TONIGHT...WHEN THE OTHERS ARE ASLEEP... PERHAPS...
12

BUT SOON THE NIGHT CAME--AND STILL NO SIGN OF RABIN SINGH! I WAS ABOUT TO GO TO BED--WHEN SUDDENLY...
OH (SOB)--HELP ME!
OH MY GOD! THAT'S MAHE! SHE SHOULD BE FAST ASLEEP!
I THREW A ROBE ACROSS MY SHOULDERS AND RACED DOWN THE HALLWAY...
SHE WAS ASLEEP! WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED--?
OH, MISS HARLINSON--PLEASE KEEP THE SNAKES AWAY FROM ME! DON'T LET THEM BITE ME--LIKE THEY DID MY FATHER (SOB)!
THERE, THERE, MAHE! YOU'RE SAFE! THERE ARE NO SNAKES HERE!
THE POOR CHILD WAS HAVING A NIGHTMARE! GENTLY, I PUT HER BACK TO BED...
GO TO SLEEP NOW, MAHE! THE SNAKES ARE ALL GONE--AND I'LL BE RIGHT ACROSS THE HALL TO PROTECT YOU!
I WAS GENTLY CLOSING MAHE'S DOOR--WHEN SUDDENLY I BECAME AWARE OF MUFFLED FOOTSTEPS IN THE HALLWAY BEHIND ME...
I WHIRLED COMPLETELY AROUND--AND THEN...
WHY ARE YOU IN THE HALLS AT THIS HOUR?
13


OH, MR. SINGH--IT'S YOU! MAHE HAD A BAD DREAM--ABOUT SNAKES! I TRIED TO COMFORT HER... I...
THANK YOU, MICHELLE! THE CHILDREN'S FATHER-MY BROTHER SANISN--WAS KILLED BY THE BITE OF A COBRA! YOU DID WELL TO COMFORT HER...
HIS EYES GREW MISTY AND HIS FACE TOOK ON A LOOK OF SADNESS AND RESIGNATION THAT WAS HIS, AND HIS ALONE...
...BUT I'M AFRAID THAT DESTINY HAS DECREED THAT THE MEMBERS OF MY FAMILY WILL DIE FROM THE VENOM OF THE COBRA! IT IS AN ANCIENT CURSE THAT HAS HAUNTED EVERY SINGH...
THEN HE TURNED--AND STRODE DOWN THE HALL! I WAS STUNNED! DID THIS MAN ACTUALLY BELIEVE THAT SOME ANCIENT SERPENTINE CURSE HAUNTED HIS ENTIRE FAMILY?
HOW CAN HE BE SO CALM ABOUT DEATH--SO RESIGNED... SO UNFEELING!
MORNING CAME--AND WITH IT THE WARM FEEL OF A BRAND-NEW DAY! IN THE BREAKFAST ROOM I MET RABIN'S ELDERLY MOTHER--AND HIS LOVELY SISTER ANILA...
GOOD MORNING, MICHELLE! I HOPE YOU SLEPT WELL! COME HAVE SOMETHING TO EAT WITH US!
14

AS I TOOK MY SEAT AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE, MY EYES FELL UPON THE RATTAN BASKET THAT RABIN'S MOTHER HELD CRADLED IN HER ARMS... TENDERLY, LOVINGLY--AS THOUGH IT CONTAINED SOMETHING SHE VALUED HIGHLY... SOMETHING PRECIOUS...
DO YOU WISH TO MEET MY DEPARTED SON SANISN?
I'D LIKE TO, MRS. SINGH-- BUT SURELY YOUR SON CAN'T REALLY BE IN THAT TINY BASKET!
THE BODY OF MY SON IS DEAD-- BUT HIS SOUL LIVES ON-- IMPRISONED IN THE BODY OF THIS COBRA!
THE SNAKE WRITHED HYPNOTICALLY AS IT UNDULATED WITHIN ITS BASKET PRISON. GOD KNOWS I TRIED NOT TO SCREAM--
HAAAA
AAAAA
--BUT SUDDENLY I BEGAN TO WAIL LIKE A WOMAN POSSESSED BY A THOUSAND DEMONS...
CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING...
15

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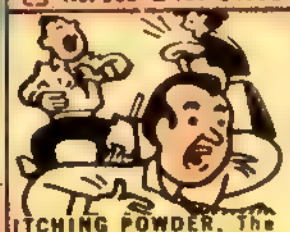

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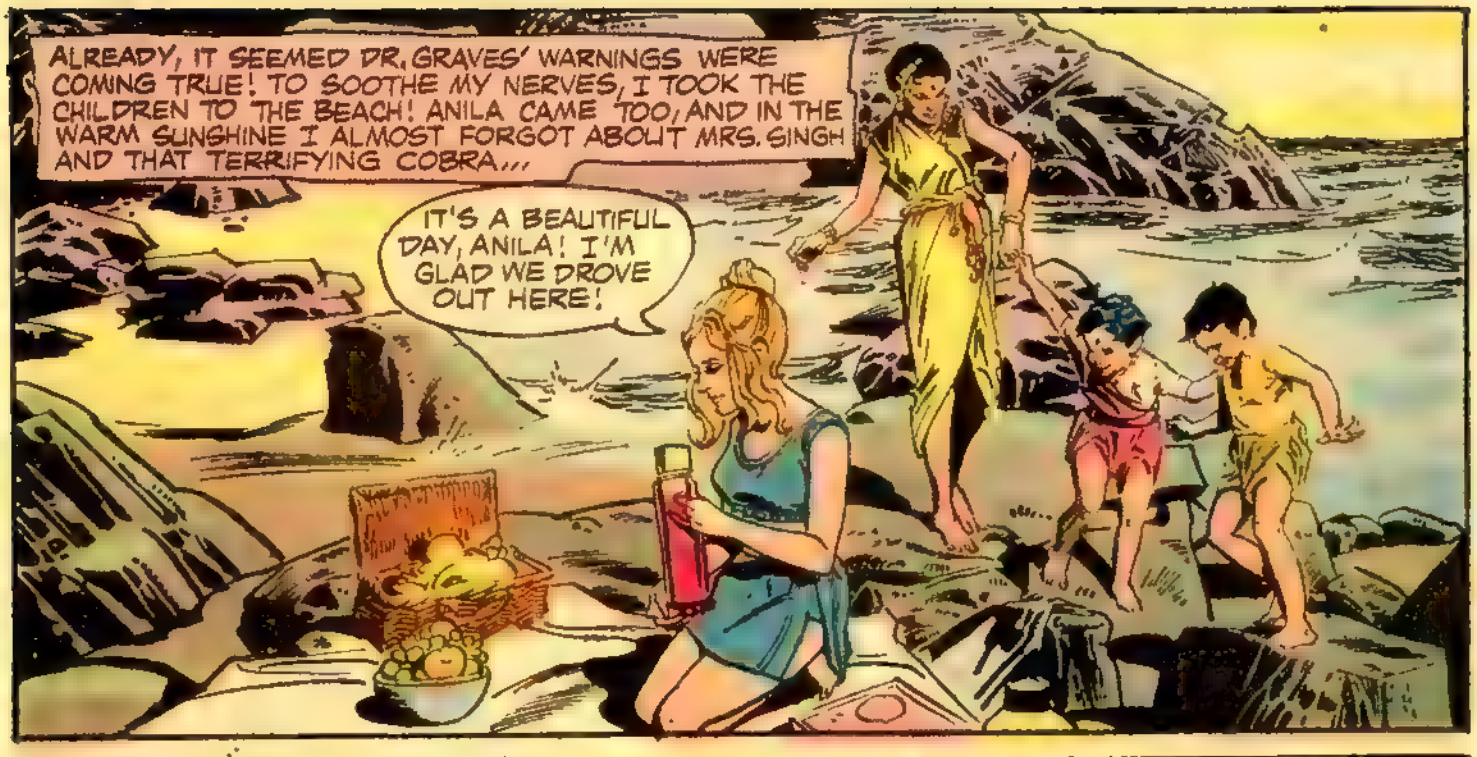
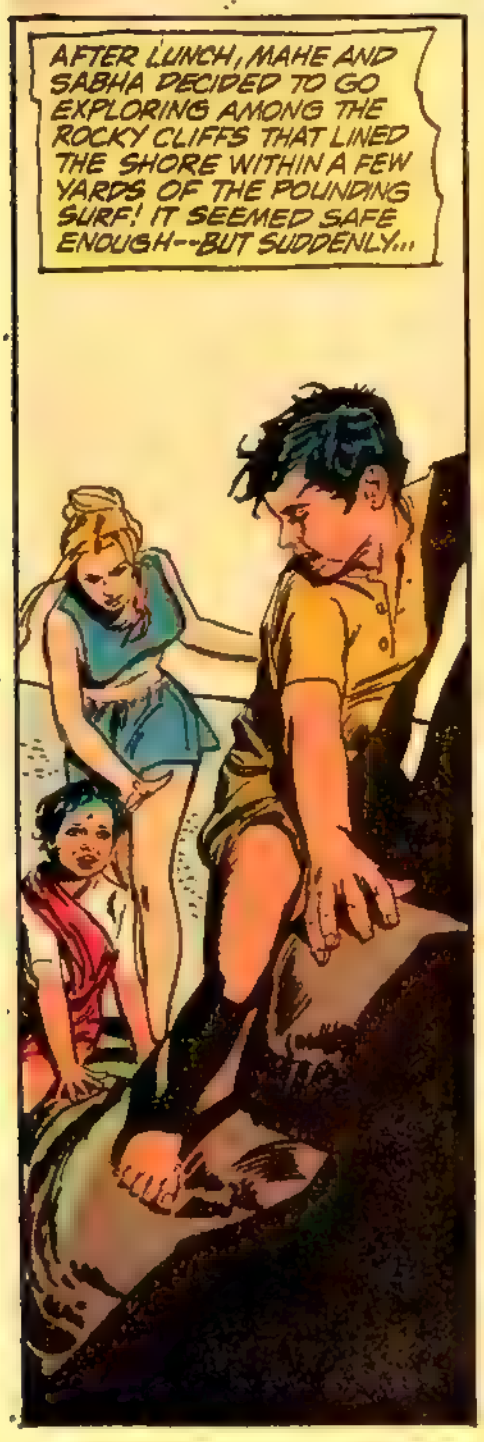
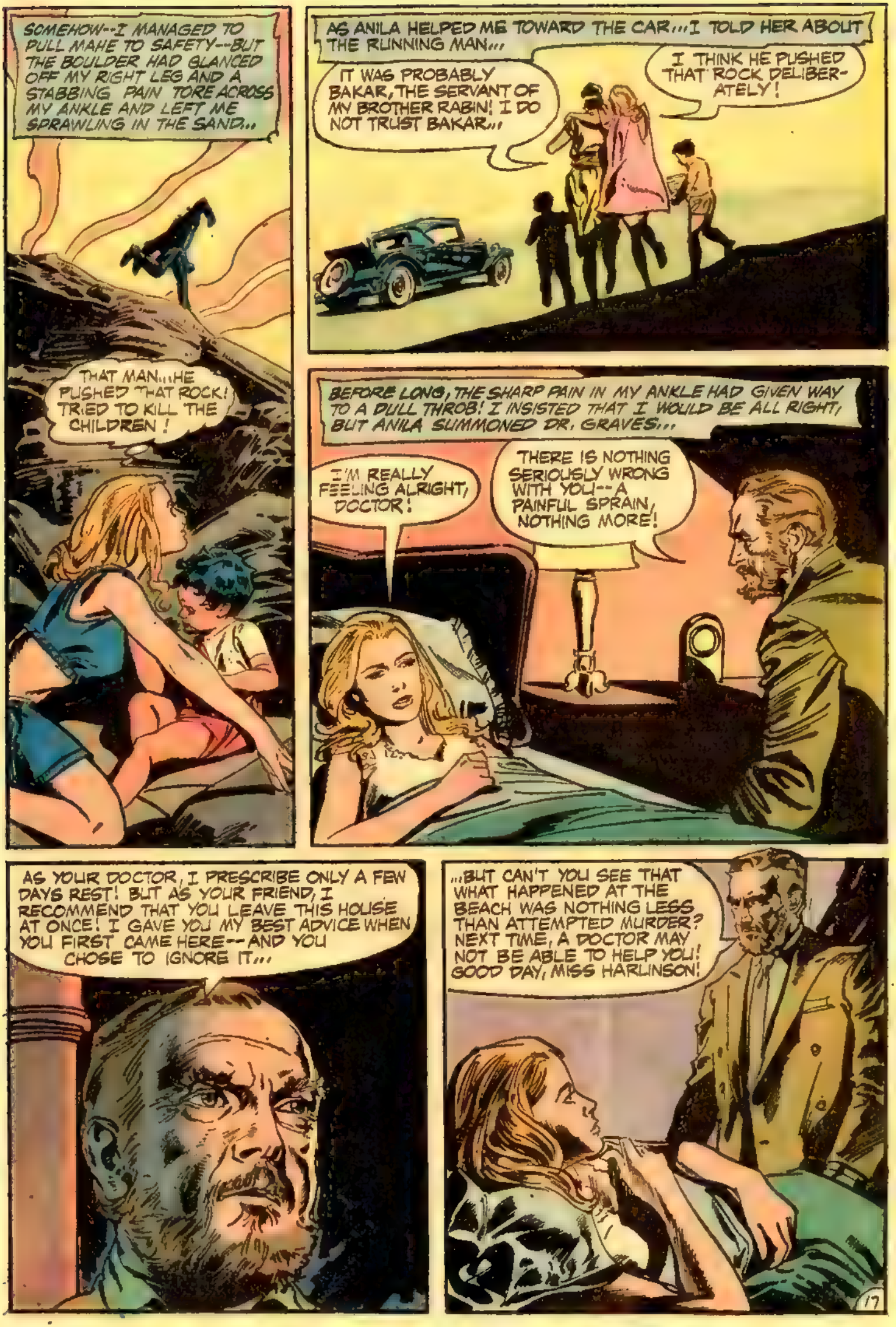
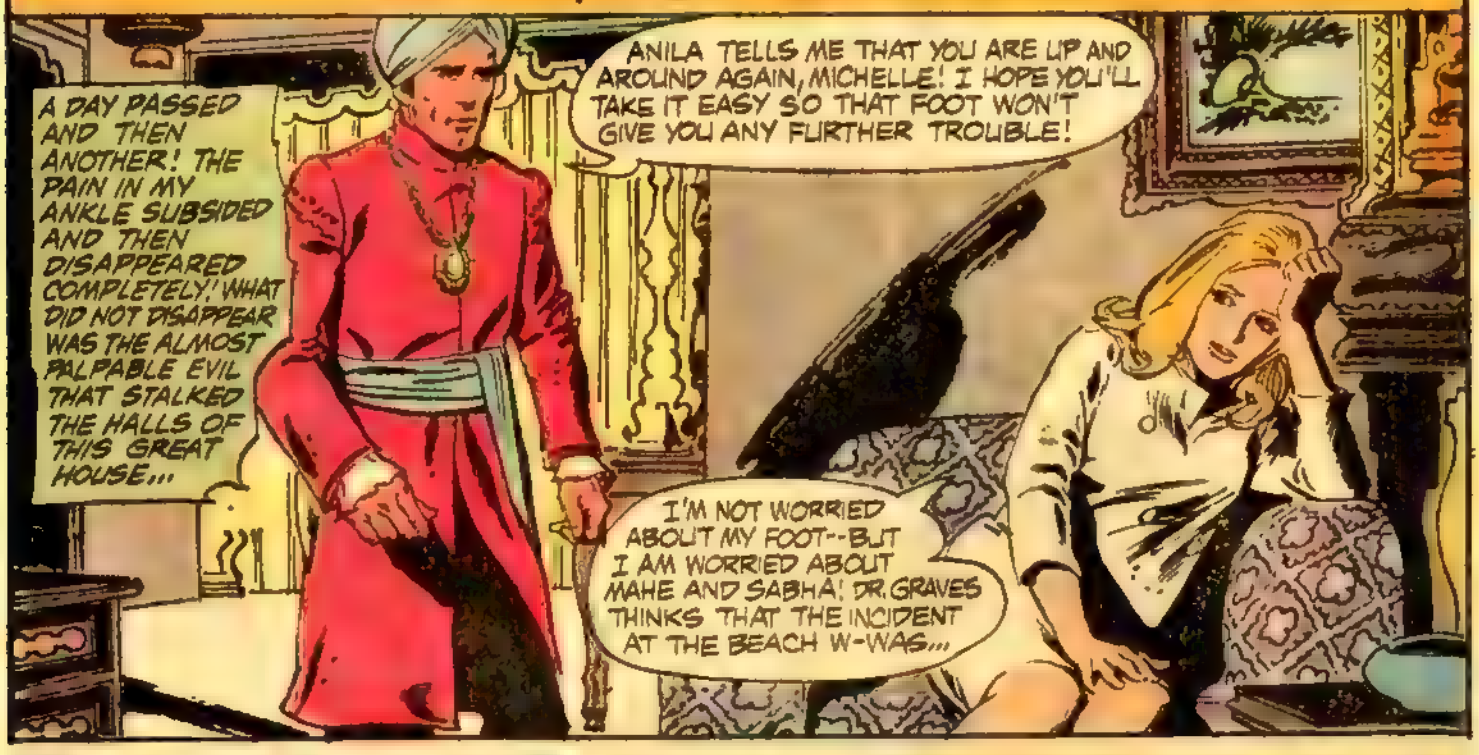

ALREADY, IT SEEMED DR. GRAVES' WARNINGS WERE COMING TRUE! TO SOOTHE MY NERVES, I TOOK THE CHILDREN TO THE BEACH! ANILA CAME TOO, AND IN THE WARM SUNSHINE I ALMOST FORGOT ABOUT MRS. SINGH AND THAT TERRIFYING COBRA...
IT'S A BEAUTIFUL DAY, ANILA! I'M GLAD WE DROVE OUT HERE!

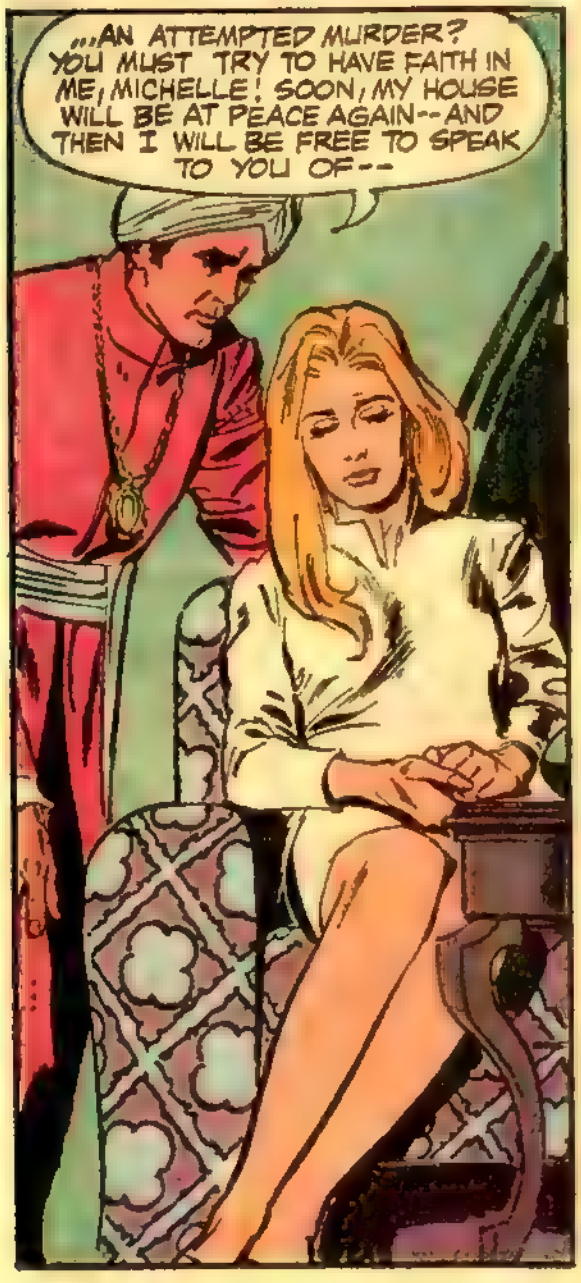

AFTER LUNCH, MAHE AND SABHA DECIDED TO GO EXPLORING AMONG THE ROCKY CLIFFS THAT LINED THE SHORE WITHIN A FEW YARDS OF THE POUNDING SURF! IT SEEMED SAFE ENOUGH--BUT SUDDENLY...

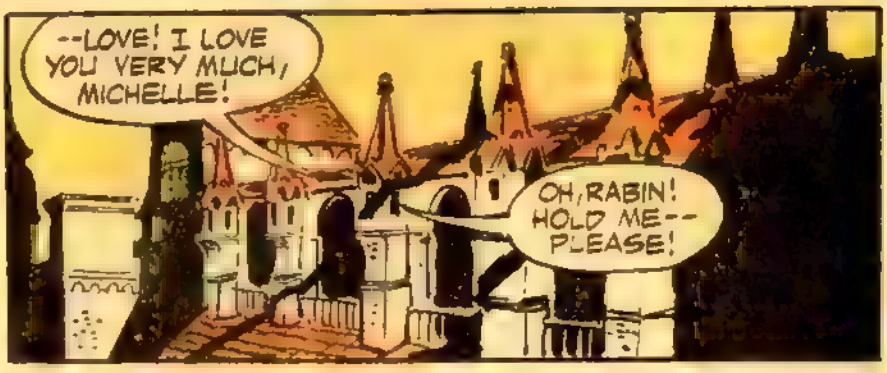
A MIGHTY BOULDER CAME HURTLING DOWN THE FACE OF THE CLIFF--DIRECTLY TOWARD THE SPOT WHERE MAHE WAS CLIMBING! IN THAT LONE SPLIT SECOND BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH, I LEAPED...
MAHE! WATCH OUT!

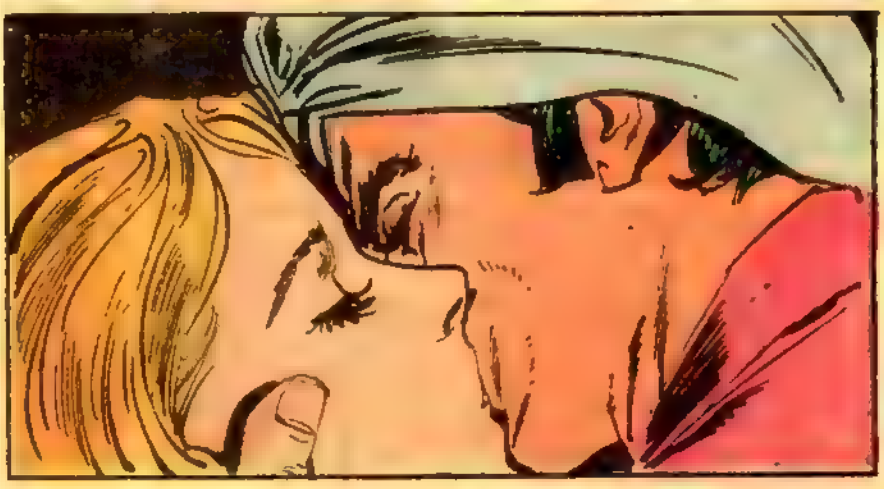

SOMEHOW--I MANAGED TO PULL MAHE TO SAFETY--BUT THE BOULDER HAD GLANCED OFF MY RIGHT LEG AND A STABBING PAIN TORE ACROSS MY ANKLE AND LEFT ME SPRAWLING IN THE SAND...
THAT MAN...HE PUSHED THAT ROCK! TRIED TO KILL THE CHILDREN!
AS ANILA HELPED ME TOWARD THE CAR...I TOLD HER ABOUT THE RUNNING MAN...
IT WAS PROBABLY BAKAR, THE SERVANT OF MY BROTHER RABIN! I DO NOT TRUST BAKAR...
I THINK HE PUSHED THAT ROCK DELIBERATELY!
BEFORE LONG, THE SHARP PAIN IN MY ANKLE HAD GIVEN WAY TO A DULL THROB! I INSISTED THAT I WOULD BE ALL RIGHT, BUT ANILA SUMMONED DR. GRAVES...
I'M REALLY FEELING ALRIGHT, DOCTOR!
THERE IS NOTHING SERIOUSLY WRONG WITH YOU--A PAINFUL SPRAIN, NOTHING MORE!
AS YOUR DOCTOR, I PRESCRIBE ONLY A FEW DAYS REST! BUT AS YOUR FRIEND, I RECOMMEND THAT YOU LEAVE THIS HOUSE AT ONCE! I GAVE YOU MY BEST ADVICE WHEN YOU FIRST CAME HERE--AND YOU CHOSE TO IGNORE IT...
...BUT CAN'T YOU SEE THAT WHAT HAPPENED AT THE BEACH WAS NOTHING LESS THAN ATTEMPTED MURDER? NEXT TIME, A DOCTOR MAY NOT BE ABLE TO HELP YOU! GOOD DAY, MISS HARLINSON!
17

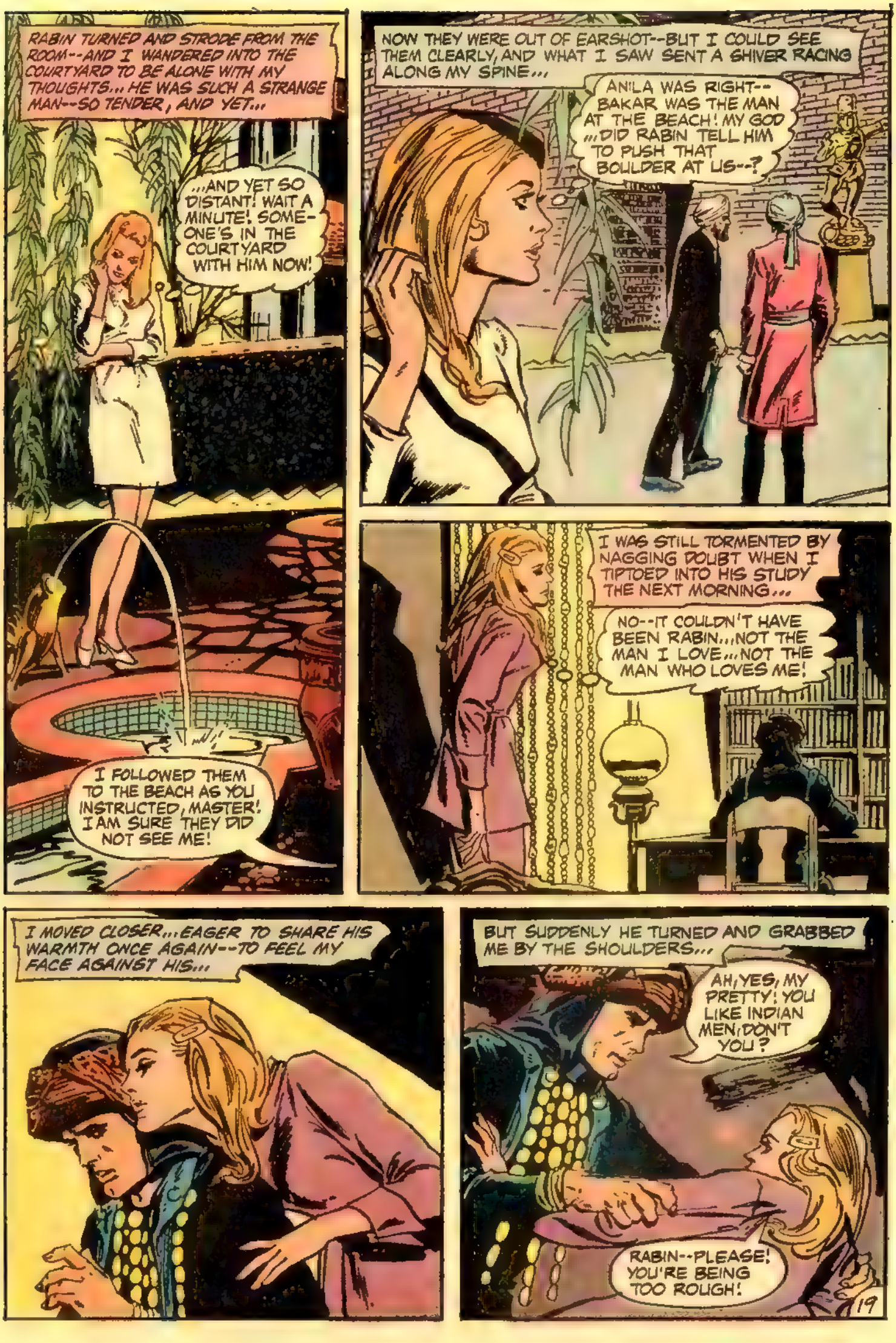
CHAPTER 3: THE INFERNO










RABIN TURNED AND STRODE FROM THE ROOM--AND I WANDERED INTO THE COURTYARD TO BE ALONE WITH MY THOUGHTS... HE WAS SUCH A STRANGE MAN--SO TENDER, AND YET...
...AND YET SO DISTANT! WAIT A MINUTE! SOMEONE'S IN THE COURTYARD WITH HIM NOW!
I FOLLOWED THEM TO THE BEACH AS YOU INSTRUCTED, MASTER! I AM SURE THEY DID NOT SEE ME!
NOW THEY WERE OUT OF EARSHOT--BUT I COULD SEE THEM CLEARLY, AND WHAT I SAW SENT A SHIVER RACING ALONG MY SPINE...
ANILA WAS RIGHT--BAKAR WAS THE MAN AT THE BEACH! MY GOD ...DID RABIN TELL HIM TO PUSH THAT BOULDER AT US--?
I WAS STILL TORMENTED BY NAGGING DOUBT WHEN I TIPTOED INTO HIS STUDY THE NEXT MORNING...
NO--IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN RABIN...NOT THE MAN I LOVE...NOT THE MAN WHO LOVES ME!
I MOVED CLOSER...EAGER TO SHARE HIS WARMTH ONCE AGAIN--TO FEEL MY FACE AGAINST HIS...
BUT SUDDENLY HE TURNED AND GRABBED ME BY THE SHOULDERS...
AH, YES, MY PRETTY! YOU LIKE INDIAN MEN, DON'T YOU?
RABIN--PLEASE! YOU'RE BEING TOO ROUGH!

HE THREW ME BACKWARD ACROSS THE TOP OF THE DESK AND PINNED MY SHOULDERS WITH HIS POWERFUL HANDS! HIS BODY PRESSED AGAINST MINE--INSISTING...DEMANDING...! THE MAN I LOVED HAD BEEN TRANSFORMED INTO A SWEATING, PANTING ANIMAL!
OH, RABIN--NOT LIKE THIS!
DON'T PLAY GAME WITH ME--ADMIT YOU YEARN FOR MY CARESS!
GET AWAY FROM ME... Y-YOU PIG!
I TORE MYSELF FROM HIS GRASP AND RACED FROM THE ROOM, SO DEAFENED BY MY OWN SOBBING THAT I DID NOT HEAR HIM CALLING AFTER ME...
HA-HAAAA! WHY DO YOU RUN, MY PRETTY? MY LOVING OUGHT TO BE AS GOOD AS RABIN'S--AFTER ALL, WE ARE TWINS! HA-HAAAA!
BY SHEER FORCE OF WILL I STOPPED MY TEARS FROM FLOWING! BUT WHO CAN STOP THE ACHING IN A HEART THAT HAS BEEN TORN IN TWO--?
H-HE TOLD ME HE LOVED ME--! HOW C-COULD HE TREAT ME LIKE J-JUST ANOTHER C-CONQUEST?
MEANWHILE, IN ANOTHER ROOM OF THE HOUSE...
HELLO, MOTHER DEAR! HELLO, ANILA! IS MOTHER STILL FONDLING HER LITTLE PET SNAKE?
I'M GLAD YOU'VE COME HOME, JAWAH!
CONTINUED ON 35TH PAGE FOLLOWING.
20

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YOU HAVE GROWN WITLESS IN YOUR OLD AGE TO IMAGINE THAT MY BROTHER LIVES IN THE BODY OF THAT SNAKE! SANISN IS DEAD--DEAD BECAUSE OF RABIN--
AND IT IS VENGEANCE THAT WE NEED NOW... NOT STUPID OLD WOMEN WITH SLIMY SNAKES!

ANILA, I DO NOT WANT RABIN TO KNOW THAT I HAVE RETURNED--
I'LL HELP YOU, JAWAH! COME--WE CAN TALK IN ANOTHER ROOM!
UNTIL I CAN PROVE THAT IT WAS HE WHO MURDERED OUR BROTHER!

THEN, AS JAWAH AND ANILA CLOSE THE DOOR BEHIND THEM...
THEY MOCK US, SANISN! BUT DO NOT WORRY--SOON YOUR DEATH WILL BE AVENGED... AND YOUR SOUL WILL BE AT PEACE ONCE AGAIN!

AS A SERVANT TUGGED AT HIS HEAVY BOOT, JAWAH DETAILED HIS PLAN...
...FOR MY PLAN TO WORK, YOU MUST GET MICHELLE AWAY FROM THE HOUSE! I TRIED TO FRIGHTEN HER AWAY AT THE BEACH--BUT...

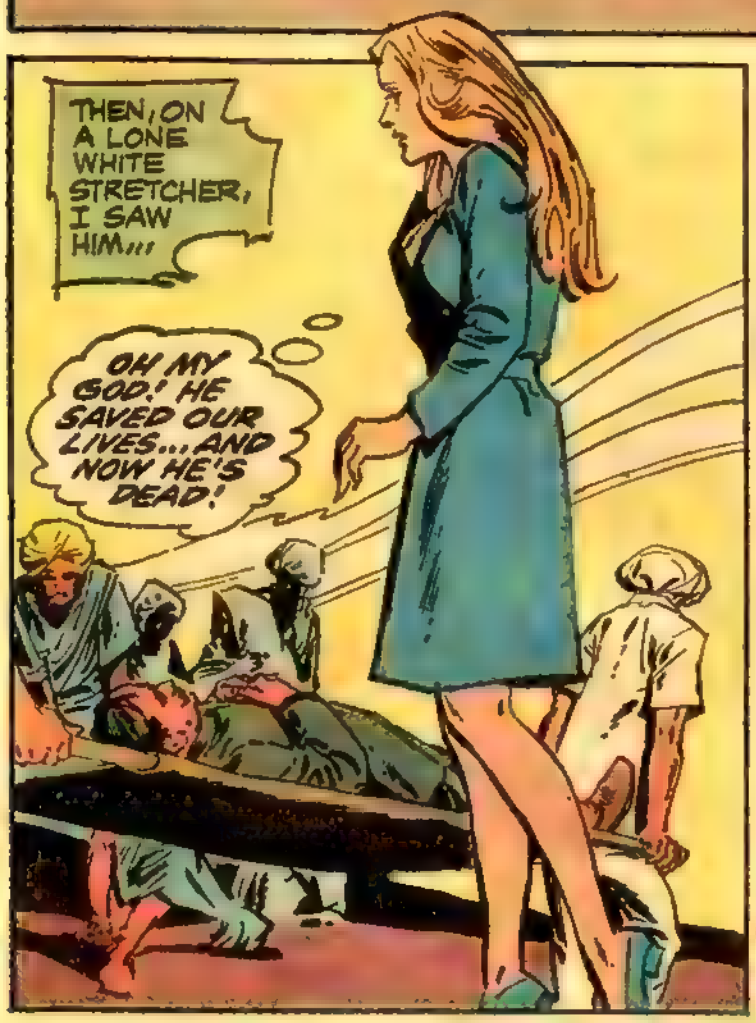
...BUT SHE LOVES RABIN AND SHE WILL NOT BE SCARED AWAY SO EASILY!
GET AWAY, YOU CLUMSY BABOON! THIS IS A PRIVATE MATTER!

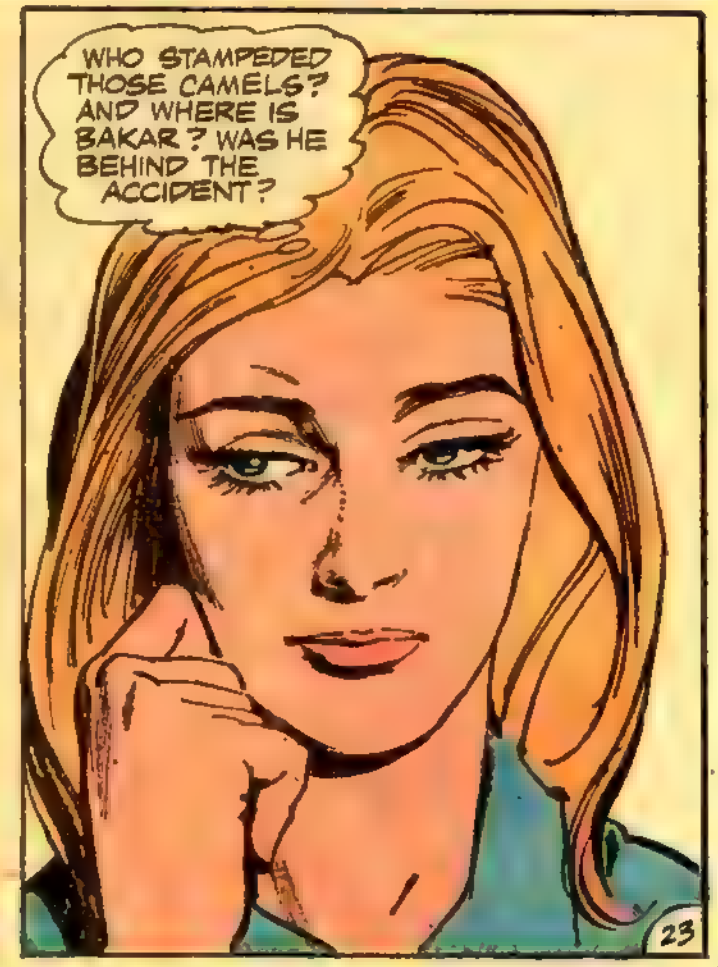
SOON AFTERWARD, ANILA JOINED ME IN THE CHILDREN'S PLAYROOM! RABIN, SHE SAID, WANTED US TO TAKE SABHA AND MAHE TO A DESERT FAIR...
THE CHILDREN WILL LOVE IT!
I'M SURE I WILL TOO! WE'LL GET READY RIGHT AWAY!
21

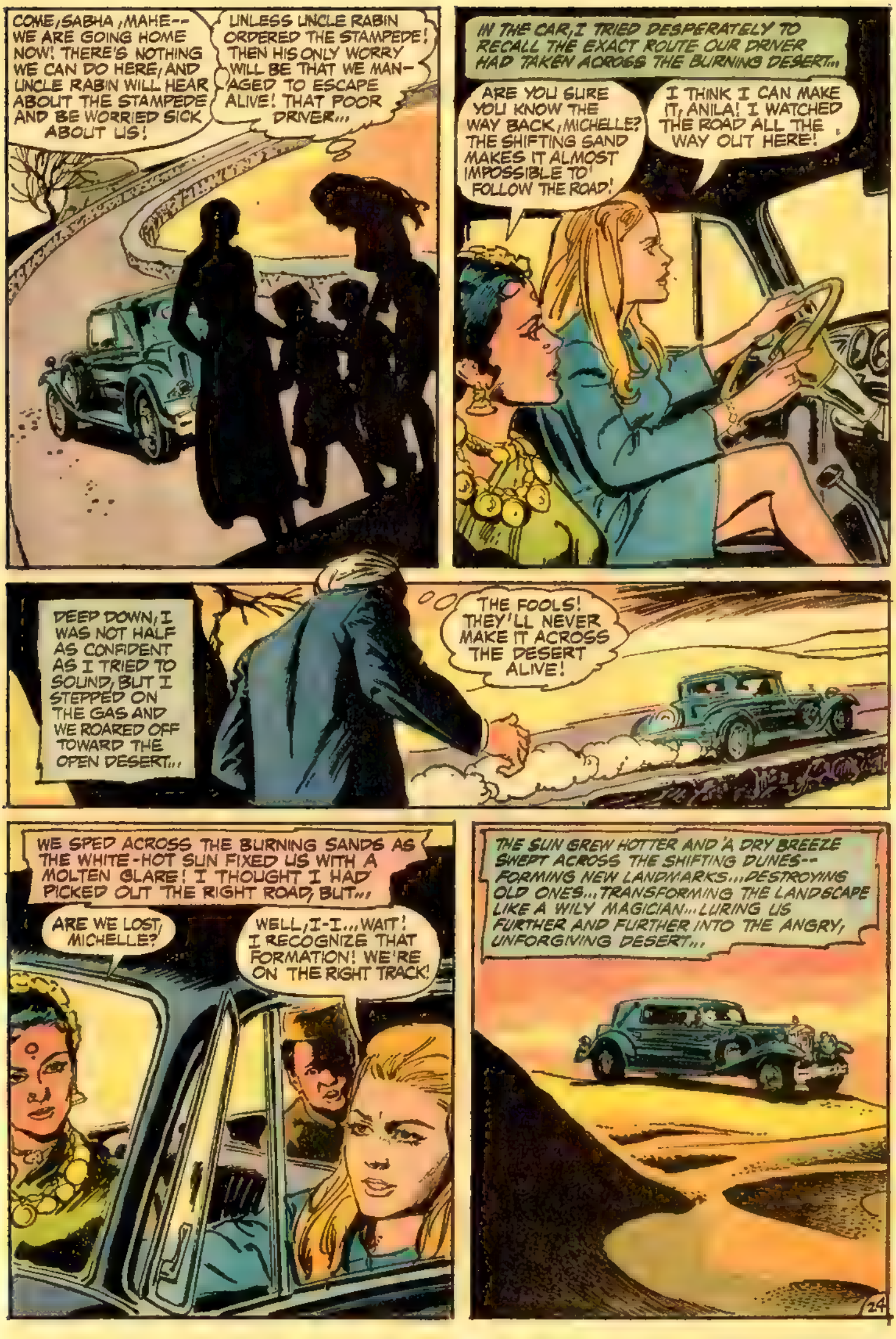
RABIN'S CHAUFFEUR DROVE US ACROSS THE DESERT TO THE FAIRGROUND, AND WE JOINED THE SHOUTING THRONG AT A HOTLY CONTESTED CAMEL RACE. THE ATMOSPHERE WAS FESTIVE AND THE AIR WAS FILLED WITH THE MUSKY ODOR OF EXOTIC ANIMALS!
ANILA, IT'S BAKAR! HE'S FOLLOWED US HERE!
SUDDENLY, A LOUD CRACKLE LIKE THE POPPING OF A GIGANTIC BULLWHIP EXPLODED--AND THE TERRIFIED CAMELS STAMPEDED INTO THE CROWD... THEIR FLAILING HOOVES CAUSING PANIC... AND MAYHEM...
KRAAK!
AAAAAAAA
...AND DEATH!
21

WITH UNBELIEVABLE COURAGE, OUR CHAUFFEUR USED HIS OWN BODY TO SHIELD US FROM THE MINDLESS ONSLAUGHT OF THE THUNDERING BEASTS...
BACK, LADIES! PLEASE HOLD ONTO THE CHILDREN TIGHTLY... AND STAY BACK!

THEN SUDDENLY, IT WAS OVER... EXCEPT FOR THE CRIES OF THE WOUNDED... THE MOANS OF THE DYING... BUT OUR DRIVER... WHAT HAPPENED TO OUR DRIVER?
BUT YOU MUST LET ME THROUGH! OUR DRIVER IS...
I'M SORRY, MADAM! BUT YOU MUST LET US CLEAR A CORRIDOR FOR THE AMBULANCES!


THEN, ON A LONE WHITE STRETCHER, I SAW HIM...
OH MY GOD! HE SAVED OUR LIVES... AND NOW HE'S DEAD!


WHO STAMPEDED THOSE CAMELS? AND WHERE IS BAKAR? WAS HE BEHIND THE ACCIDENT?


COME, SABHA, MAHE-- WE ARE GOING HOME NOW! THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO HERE, AND UNCLE RABIN WILL HEAR ABOUT THE STAMPEDE AND BE WORRIED SICK ABOUT US!
UNLESS UNCLE RABIN ORDERED THE STAMPEDE! THEN HIS ONLY WORRY WILL BE THAT WE MANAGED TO ESCAPE ALIVE! THAT POOR DRIVER...
IN THE CAR, I TRIED DESPERATELY TO RECALL THE EXACT ROUTE OUR DRIVER HAD TAKEN ACROSS THE BURNING DESERT...
ARE YOU SURE YOU KNOW THE WAY BACK, MICHELLE? THE SHIFTING SAND MAKES IT ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO FOLLOW THE ROAD!
I THINK I CAN MAKE IT, ANILA! I WATCHED THE ROAD ALL THE WAY OUT HERE!
DEEP DOWN, I WAS NOT HALF AS CONFIDENT AS I TRIED TO SOUND, BUT I STEPPED ON THE GAS AND WE ROARED OFF TOWARD THE OPEN DESERT...
THE FOOLS! THEY'LL NEVER MAKE IT ACROSS THE DESERT ALIVE!
WE SPED ACROSS THE BURNING SANDS AS THE WHITE-HOT SUN FIXED US WITH A MOLTEN GLARE! I THOUGHT I HAD PICKED OUT THE RIGHT ROAD, BUT...
ARE WE LOST, MICHELLE?
WELL, I-I... WAIT! I RECOGNIZE THAT FORMATION! WE'RE ON THE RIGHT TRACK!
THE SUN GREW HOTTER AND A DRY BREEZE SWEPT ACROSS THE SHIFTING DUNES-- FORMING NEW LANDMARKS... DESTROYING OLD ONES... TRANSFORMING THE LANDSCAPE LIKE A WILY MAGICIAN... LURING US FURTHER AND FURTHER INTO THE ANGRY, UNFORGIVING DESERT...
24

MEANWHILE, IN HIS STUDY, RABIN SINGH WORKED QUIETLY--UNAWARE OF THE STARK DRAMA UNFOLDING IN THE DESERT...
...AND UNAWARE OF THE SILENT FIGURE, GUN IN HAND, WHO CREPT STEALTHILY THROUGH THE HALLWAY AND INTO THE STUDY...
THEN, SUDDENLY, THE CLICK OF A BOOT HEEL ON ANCIENT TILE... THE FAINT ODOR OF GUN-GREASE ON A WELL-OILED PISTOL... RABIN WHIRLED--
JAWAH! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? PUT AWAY THAT GUN!
NO, DEAR BROTHER! I WILL NOT PUT IT AWAY-- AND IF YOU MAKE ANY SUDDEN MOVES, I WILL KILL YOU IMMEDIATELY INSTEAD OF LETTING YOU DIE IN THE FIRE!
CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING
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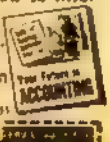

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DIRECT CURRENTS 2

Well, here I am again—E. Nelson Bridwell—the Big E—back with more info on upcoming DC mags. This month there's a sensational line-up—so much that it's hard to know where to begin. For instance, I'm tempted to go right into raptures about **Tarzan of the Apes**—but instead, I'll start at the top of the schedule.

Can you picture a single Earthman—a Sergeant of Detectives—tackling the evil gods from **Apokolips**? That's the situation in "The Death-Wish Of Terrible Turpin," the latest epic of **Orion** and **THE NEW GODS. Kalibak** (remember him?) is loose, and **Sgt. Turpin** is out to stop him, despite his alien powers. Also in this **May** issue **(#8)** is another story of **Fastbak**, plus a **Golden Age** classic featuring **Manhunter.** You can get it on Feb. 17.

Here's your chance to learn "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Fear"* (*But Were Afraid to Ask)! Where else would you expect to find a title like that but in the pages of **THE UNEXPECTED**? Of course, there are always plenty of other top tales to tingle your palate (and your spine) in this mag—and the **April** issue **(#134)** is no exception. At this writing, I'm not sure just what all the stories will be, or I'd give you a full rundown; but it'll be worth buying on Feb. 24!

Editor Joe Orlando plotted it—John Albano wrote it—Jim Aparo illoed it. It's called "The Demon," and it headlines the **April HOUSE OF MYSTERY (#201).** Naturally, there's plenty more in this one—including "Put Your Trust In a Killer," written by Steve Skeates and featuring the American debut of the amazing art of Adolfo Buyila. Albano also wrote "A Tale Of Vengeance," which Sam Glanzman illustrated. This issue hits the stands Feb. 15.

"And Through Him Save a World" is the latest in the award-winning **GREEN LANTERN-GREEN ARROW** series. It concerns a man who launches a crusade . . . and is willing to die for his ideals! Also, the **Golden Age Green Lantern** in a classic story from the very last issue of his magazine (originally published in 1949). It's called "The Impossible Mr. Paradox." This is today's most talked about comic, so don't pass it up, or you'll be sorry! It's the **May** issue **(#89)**, on sale Feb. 22.

JIMMY OLSEN and **The Newsboy Legion** have been taken prisoner by **Prof. Volcanum**, the would-be world conqueror who eats fire. Even **Superman** will have some problems trying to cope with this character. There's also another tale of the **D.N.A. Project**; plus a **Golden Age Newsboy Legion** story—about "The Meanest Man On Earth." This will be Kirby's last **Olsen** issue **(April, #148)**, because he'll be working on a **new** mag, which will take a lot of his time. This issue is on sale Feb. 17.

The Unknown Soldier has a real challenge this time—to prevent the planned assassination of **General Eisenhower!** If not for this mystery man of World War II, would **Ike** have lived to be President? That's the question. Also in this issue—another top tale of **The Balloon Buster!** If air action is you bag, this is the one for you! Tune into battle action in the **May STAR-SPANGLED WAR STORIES (#162)**, on sale Feb. 15.

More science-fiction comes your way in the five-star **May** issue of **FROM BEYOND THE UNKNOWN (#16).** Just looking at the titles has piqued my curiosity. There's "The World-Wrecker" (the cover story); "The Doom From Station X"; "The Man Who Discovered the Earth"; "The 1,000-Year-Old Man"; and "Captives Of the Eclipse." You know you can depend on Editor Julie Schwartz to get a whole spectrum of stories, ranging throughout time and space. And the **time** this goes on sale is Feb. 17.

LOIS LANE will never be the same again! She has a new job, a new apartment, and some new roommates. And she runs into the trickiest criminal she's tackled in some time! Get with it! Get **LOIS LANE #121 (April)!** The issue also features two classic **Lois** tales, one from the **Golden Age** (which does **not** feature **Superman!**), and the other the first story of **Lois** as a volunteer nurse. Don't miss this issue—or you'll miss plenty of big changes! It's on sale Feb. 22.

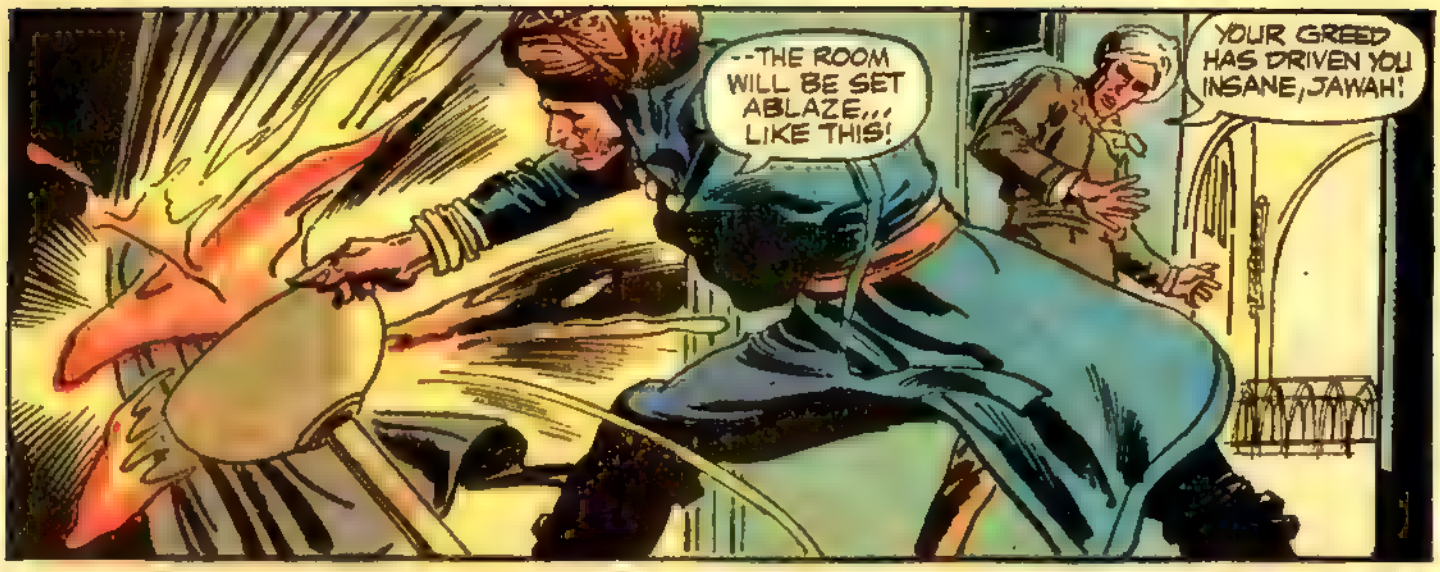
SUPERBOY stars in "The Glass Nightmare," a startling story scripted by Leo Dorfman, pencilled by Bob Brown, and inked by Murphy Anderson. Besides this terrific lead, the **April** issue **(#184)** answers your persistent requests for a new **Legion Of Super-Heroes** tale. Yes, Cary Bates has written one and you'll be reading it—if you make sure you latch onto this mag when it goes on sale Feb. 24!

FOR THERE WILL BE A FIRE, BROTHER! AN UNIDENTIFIED BURGLAR IS ABOUT TO TURN THIS ROOM INTO A ROARING INFERNO-- AND YOU, DEAR BROTHER, WILL PERISH IN THE FLAMES!
THAT'S VERY INTERESTING, JAWAH! ALMOST AS INGENIOUS AS THE WAY YOU MURDERED OUR BROTHER, SANISN!

AH, SANISN! THAT WAS A TRULY BEAUTIFUL MURDER, BROTHER RABIN! OUR FAMILY HAS ALWAYS HAD THIS STUPID PEASANT SUPERSTITION ABOUT SNAKES! I MERELY HELPED DESTINY ALONG BY PROVIDING THE SNAKE!

THEN OUR FOOLISH MOTHER INSISTED THAT THE SNAKE HAD SEIZED POSSESSION OF HIS SOUL... PERHAPS YOU'LL COME BACK AS A COW! BUT MOST IMPORTANT--THE FAMILY FORTUNE WILL BE MINE...
...AS IT WOULD HAVE BEEN IF YOU AND SANISN HAD NOT BEEN BORN A FEW MINUTES EARLIER THAN I!

BUT ENOUGH OF THIS PRATTLE, EH, RABIN! OUR BURGLAR IS ABOUT TO MAKE HIS GRAND ENTRANCE! HE WILL DEMAND YOUR MONEY... YOU WILL REFUSE... THERE WILL BE A STRUGGLE... AND SOMEHOW--

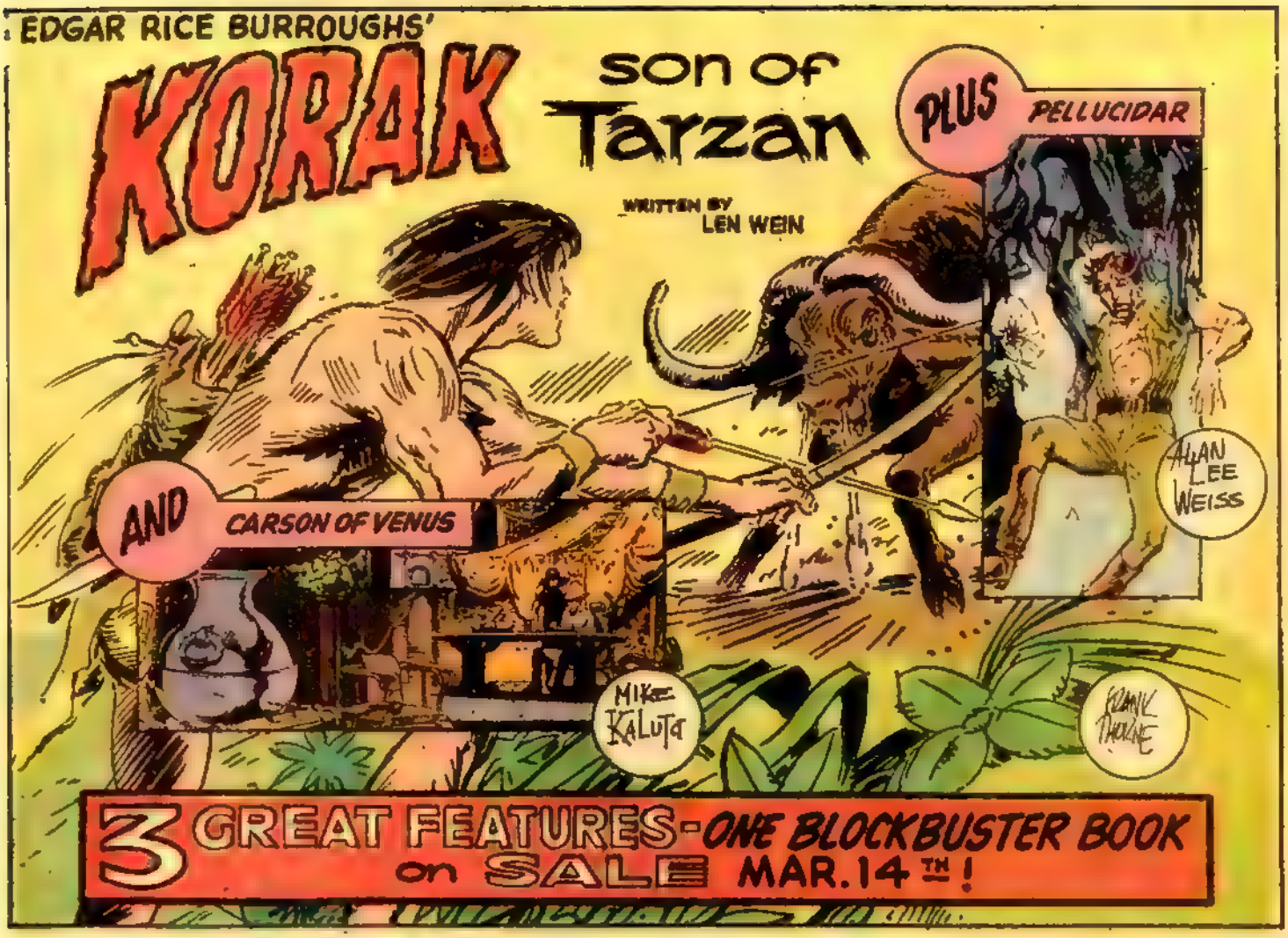

--THE ROOM WILL BE SET ABLAZE,,, LIKE THIS!
YOUR GREED HAS DRIVEN YOU INSANE, JAWAH!

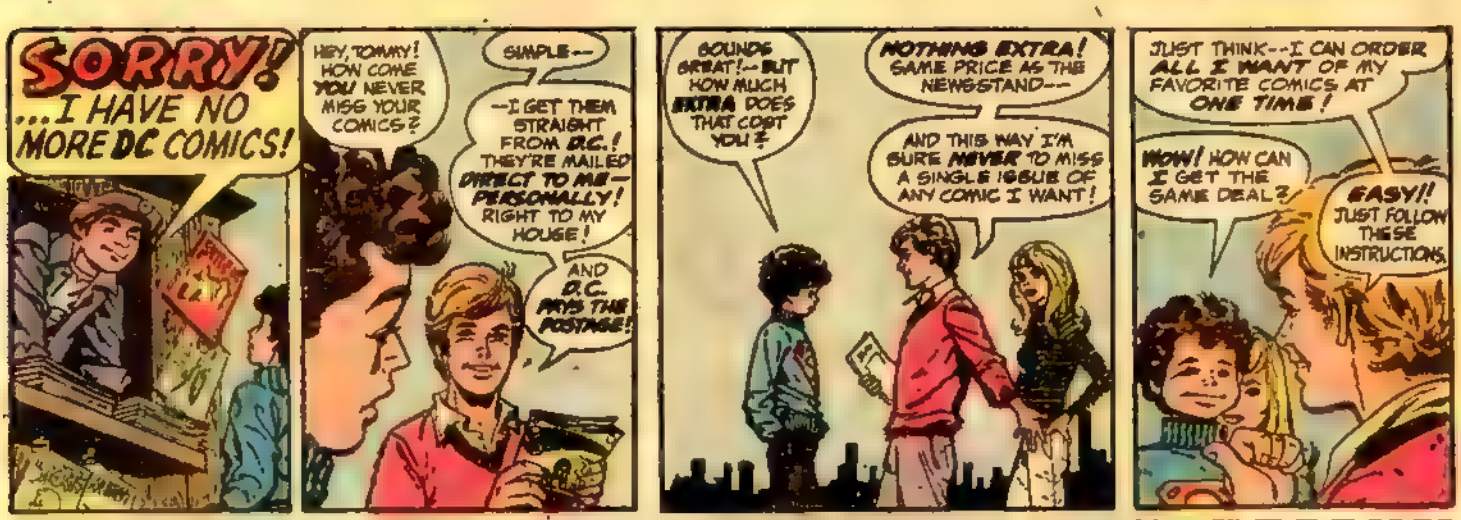
THE FIRE DANCED AND CRACKLED ACROSS THE WOOD-PANELED WALLS--THEN CLIMBED TOWARD THE CEILING AND DEVOURED IT TOO! IN THE MIDST OF THE INFERNO, A MADMAN CACKLED...
HA-HAAA! THIS ROOM WILL BE YOUR FUNERAL PYRE, RABIN!

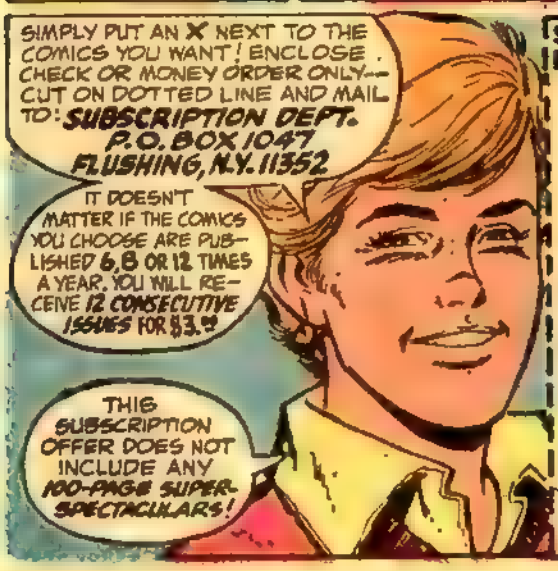
BUT FROM OUTSIDE THE ROOM, TWO PAIRS OF EYES STARED GRIMLY AT THE RAGING FLAMES...
YES, MY SANISN-- SOON YOUR TORMENTED SOUL WILL BE AT PEACE AGAIN!

THE FLAMES HISSED AND ROARED AND GLINTED OFF THE BARREL OF JAWAH'S PISTOL! RABIN WAS DOOMED-- AND THEN...
HERE HE IS, GANISN-- THE MAN WHO MURDERED YOU! AWAITS YOUR VENGEANCE!
MY GOD, MOTHER-- G-GET THAT SNAKE AWAY FROM ME! G-GET AWAY!

THE COBRA SWAYED HYPNOTICALLY, ITS HOOD SPREAD... ITS EYES ABLAZE! AND THEN IT STRUCK-- SINKING ITS FANGS DEEP INTO JAWAH'S THROAT, HISSING ITS SERPENTINE SONG OF TERROR AND VENOM AND DEATH!!
AAA
RABIN PLUNGED THROUGH THE ROARING FLAMES AND DRAGGED HIS MOTHER TO THE SAFETY OF THE STAIRWELL OUTSIDE THE DOOR--BUT...
DO NOT HOLD ME HERE, RABIN! MY PLACE IS WITH SANISN! IN THE HOLY FIRE THAT CLEANSES AND PURIFIES...
MOTHER...NO! SANISN IS DEAD! FORGET THE COBRA!
BUT WITH A DESPERATE LUNGE, THE OLD WOMAN BROKE FREE AND PLUNGED BACK INTO THE RAGING INFERNO...
I'M COMING, SANISN! I'M COMING!
MOTHER! MOTHER! SWEET GOD! COME OUT OF THERE! THE WALLS WILL CRUMBLE AT ANY MINUTE!
CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING..
28







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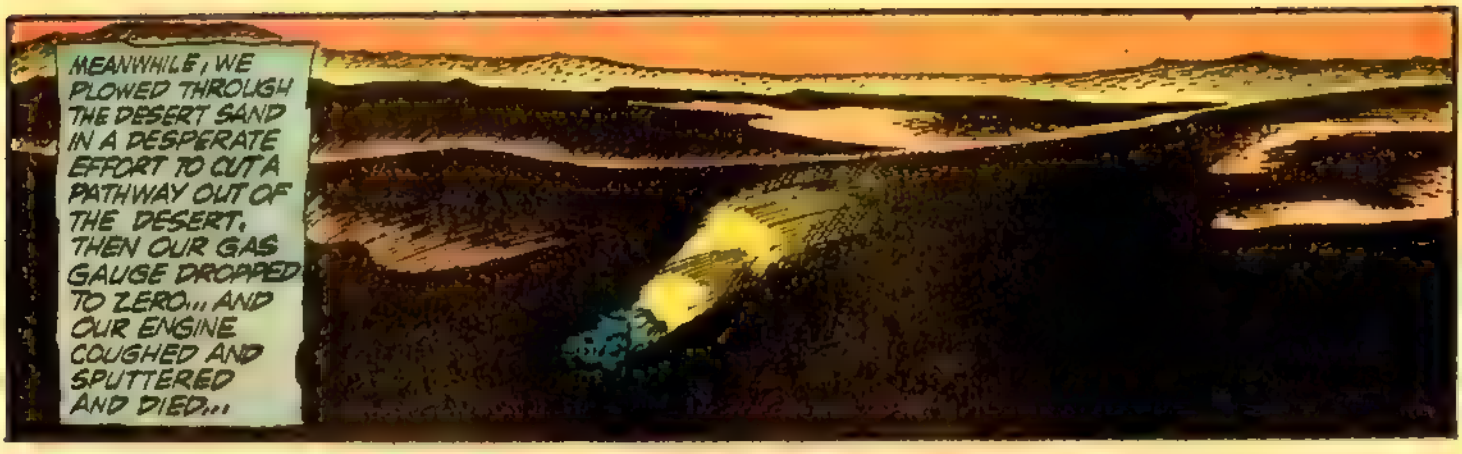
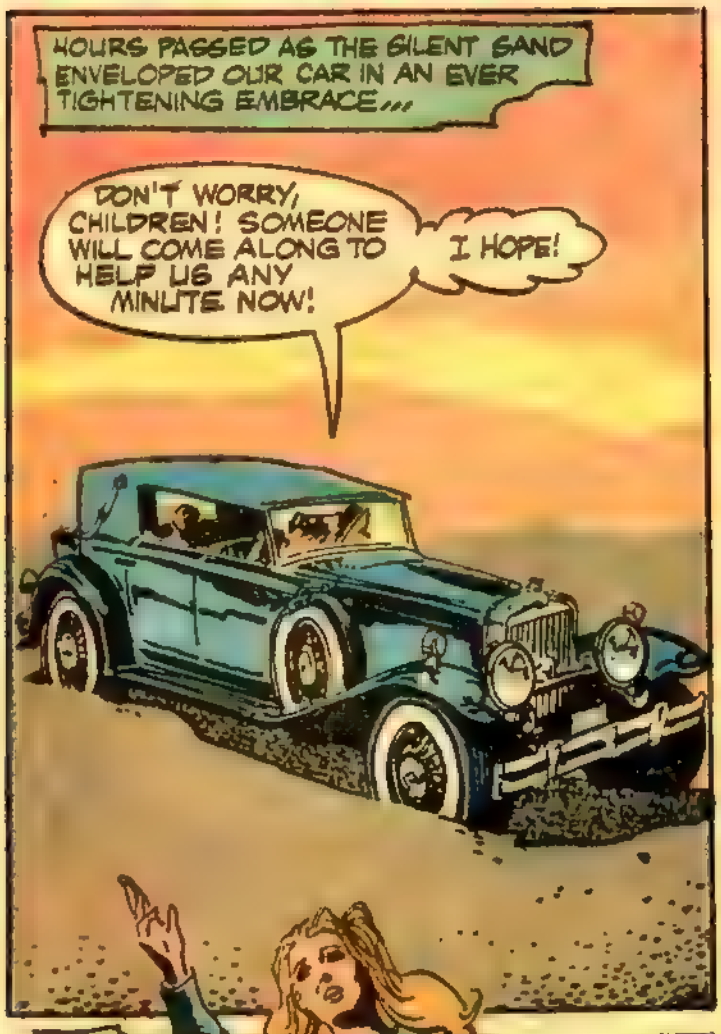
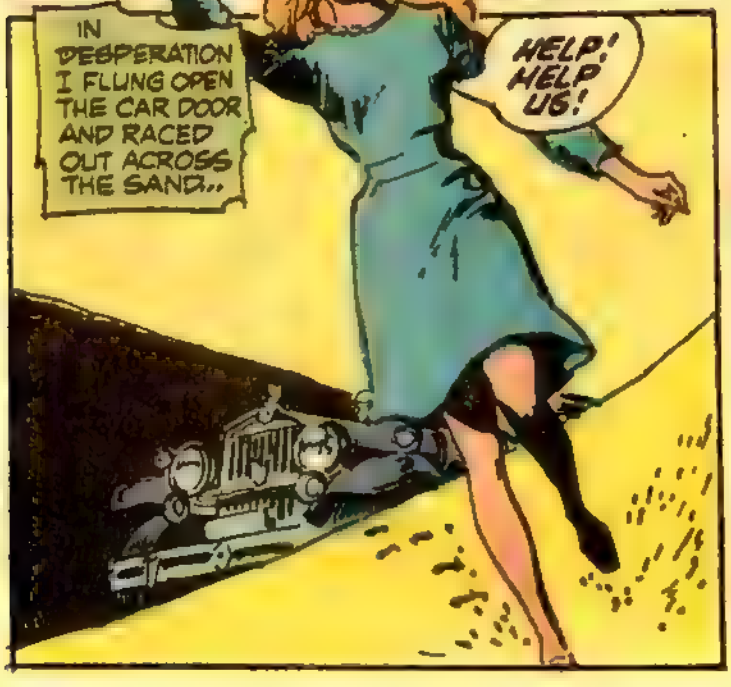
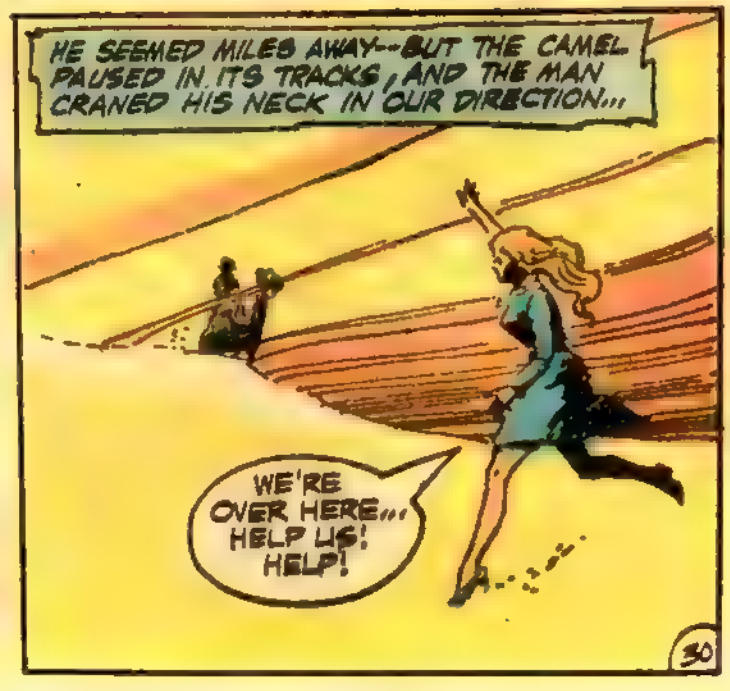
CHAPTER 4: THE DESERT


MEANWHILE, WE PLOWED THROUGH THE DESERT SAND IN A DESPERATE EFFORT TO CUT A PATHWAY OUT OF THE DESERT. THEN OUR GAS GAUGE DROPPED TO ZERO... AND OUR ENGINE COUGHED AND SPUTTERED AND DIED...

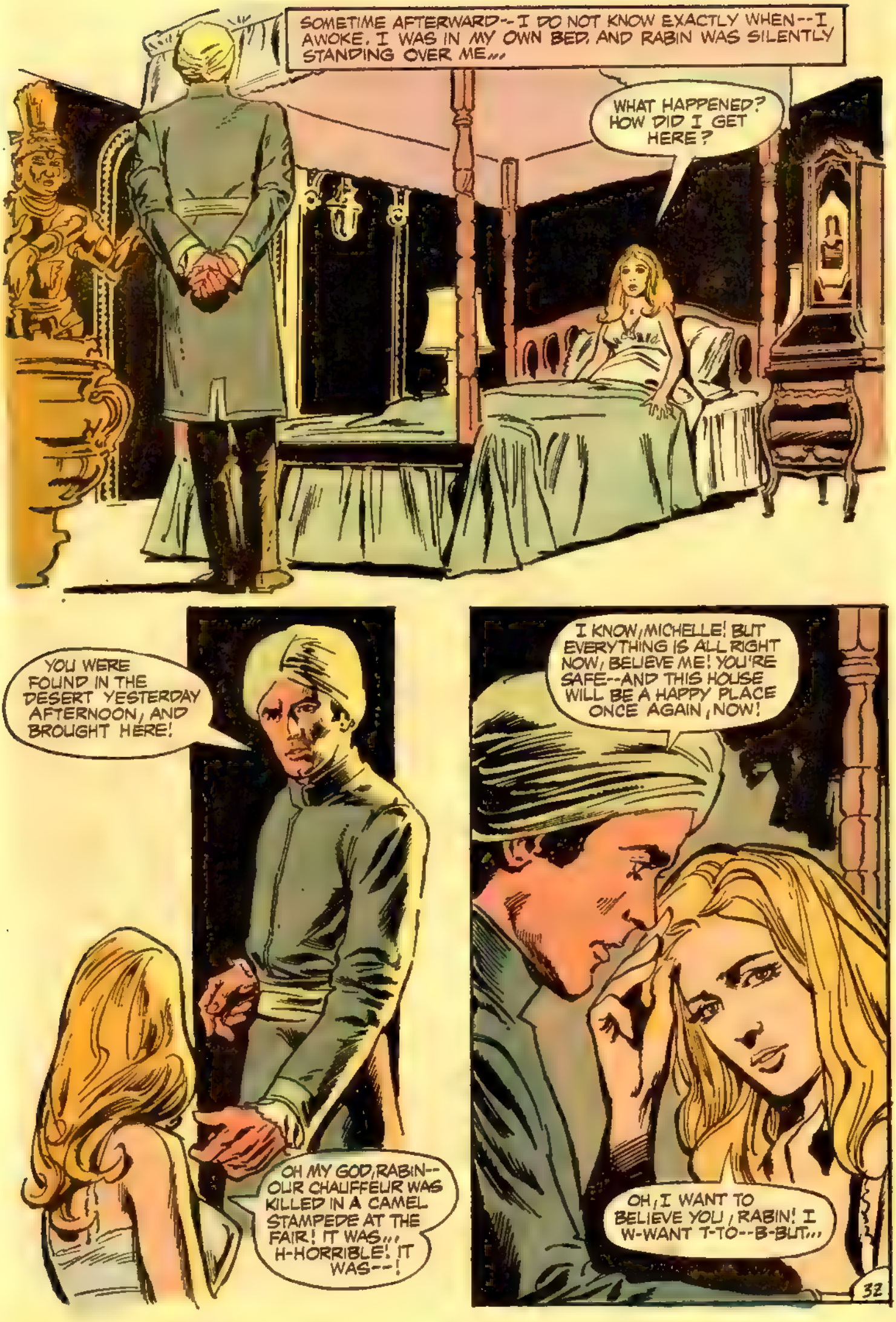

HOURS PASSED AS THE SILENT SAND ENVELOPED OUR CAR IN AN EVER TIGHTENING EMBRACE...
DON'T WORRY, CHILDREN! SOMEONE WILL COME ALONG TO HELP US ANY MINUTE NOW!
I HOPE!

THEN SUDDENLY, THROUGH THE SAND-SHROUDED WINDSHIELD, I SAW A LONE CAMEL-RIDER COMING TOWARD US THROUGH THE DESERT...
A MAN--ON A CAMEL! WE'RE SAVED!
HE CAN'T POSSIBLY SEE US, MICHELLE! HE'LL ONLY PASS US BY!


IN DESPERATION I FLUNG OPEN THE CAR DOOR AND RACED OUT ACROSS THE SAND...
HELP! HELP US!


HE SEEMED MILES AWAY--BUT THE CAMEL PAUSED IN ITS TRACKS, AND THE MAN CRANED HIS NECK IN OUR DIRECTION...
WE'RE OVER HERE... HELP US! HELP!

THE CAMEL GALLOPED! I THOUGHT WE WERE SAVED! BUT THEN I REALIZED THAT WE WERE NOT SAVED--THAT THE LONE RIDER WAS NONE OTHER THAN...
BAKAR!!
OH, MY GOD! IT'S BAKAR! HE'S FOLLOWED US OUT HERE! HE'LL KILL US ALL!
BAKAR DISMOUNTED AND WALKED GRIMLY TOWARD ME--HIS EYES NARROWED IN THE DESERT SUN. I FAINTED!
31


SOMETIME AFTERWARD--I DO NOT KNOW EXACTLY WHEN--I AWOKE. I WAS IN MY OWN BED, AND RABIN WAS SILENTLY STANDING OVER ME...
WHAT HAPPENED? HOW DID I GET HERE?
YOU WERE FOUND IN THE DESERT YESTERDAY AFTERNOON, AND BROUGHT HERE!
OH MY GOD, RABIN--OUR CHAUFFEUR WAS KILLED IN A CAMEL STAMPEDE AT THE FAIR! IT WAS... H-HORRIBLE! IT WAS--!
I KNOW, MICHELLE! BUT EVERYTHING IS ALL RIGHT NOW, BELIEVE ME! YOU'RE SAFE--AND THIS HOUSE WILL BE A HAPPY PLACE ONCE AGAIN, NOW!
OH, I WANT TO BELIEVE YOU, RABIN! I W-WANT T-TO--B-BUT...
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YOU CAN BELIEVE ME, MICHELLE! I TOLD YOU THAT ONE DAY I WOULD BE FREE TO SPEAK OF LOVE--NOW THAT DAY HAS COME...
HE TOOK ME IN HIS ARMS... AND FOR A MOMENT MY FEARS VANISHED IN THE SWEET WARMTH OF HIS EMBRACE--BUT...
NO! I WON'T LET YOU TREAT ME THIS WAY--TENDER ONE MOMENT, VIOLENT THE NEXT!
TENDER? VIOLENT? MICHELLE, YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND--YOU...
G-GET OUT OF MY ROOM! YOU THINK I'M SOME KIND OF FURRY ANIMAL--TO BE PETTED WHEN YOU'RE IN THE MOOD... KICKED WHEN I GET IN YOUR WAY--!
IT WAS HOURS LATER WHEN SABHA AND MAHE BURST HAPPILY INTO MY ROOM. I HAD BEEN EAGER TO SEE THEM. BUT I SHRANK BACK IN TERROR WHEN I SAW THAT THEY WERE ACCOMPANIED BY THE SINISTER BAKAR...
M'GS HARLINSON! UNCLE RAB N WOULDN'T LET US VISIT YOU TILL YOU'D GOTTEN YOUR REST!
BUT YOU'RE ALL RIGHT NOW, AREN'T YOU? I CAN TELL!
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kubert & tarzan together in A BLOCKBUSTER from DC on sale feb. 29

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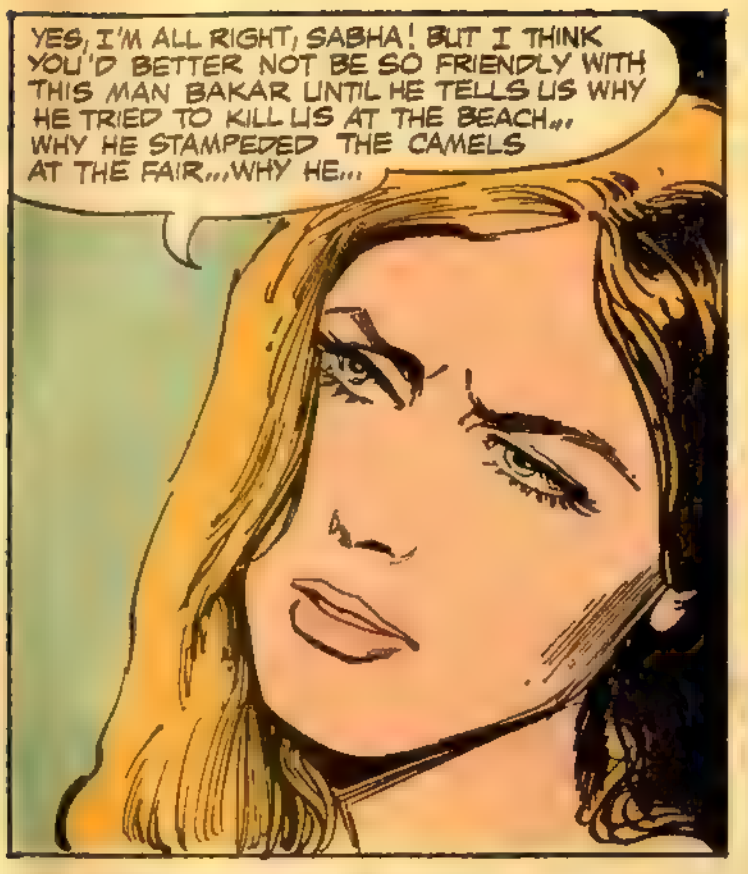
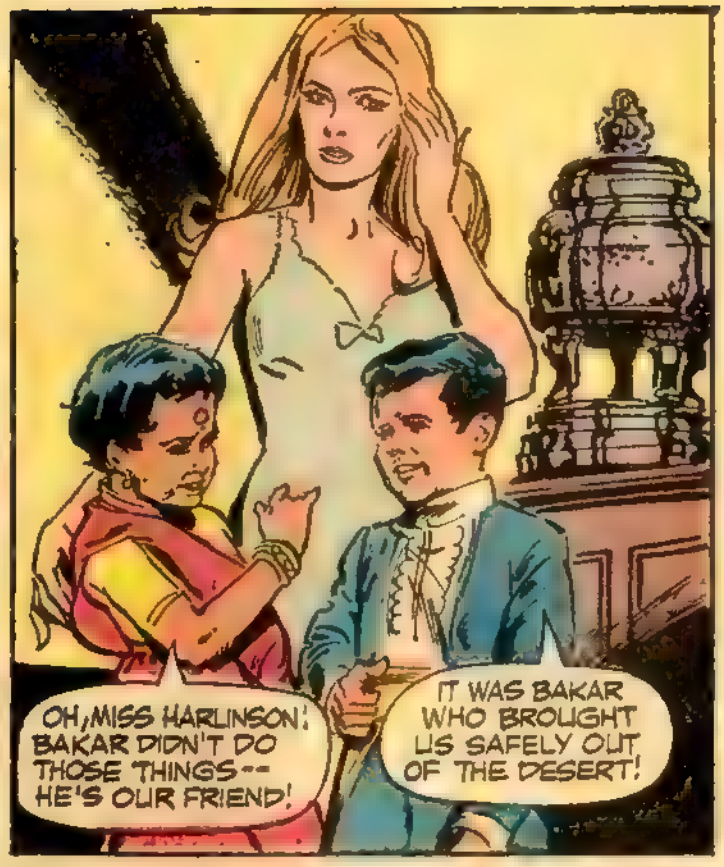
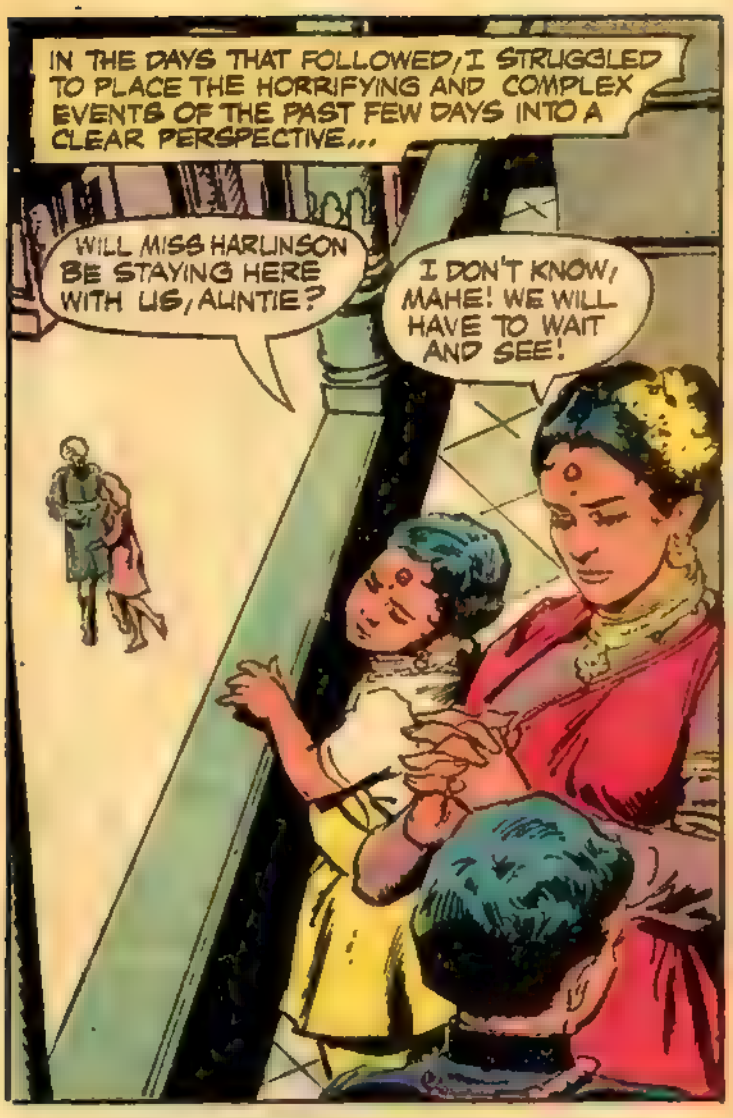

YES, I'M ALL RIGHT, SABHA! BUT I THINK YOU'D BETTER NOT BE SO FRIENDLY WITH THIS MAN BAKAR UNTIL HE TELLS US WHY HE TRIED TO KILL US AT THE BEACH... WHY HE STAMPEDED THE CAMELS AT THE FAIR...WHY HE...


OH, MISS HARLINSON! BAKAR DIDN'T DO THOSE THINGS -- HE'S OUR FRIEND!
IT WAS BAKAR WHO BROUGHT US SAFELY OUT OF THE DESERT!

UNCLE RABIN -- TELL MISS HARLINSON HOW BAKAR FOUND US IN THE DESERT!
YES -- AND HOW HE SUMMONED THE DESERT POLICE TO HELP US!

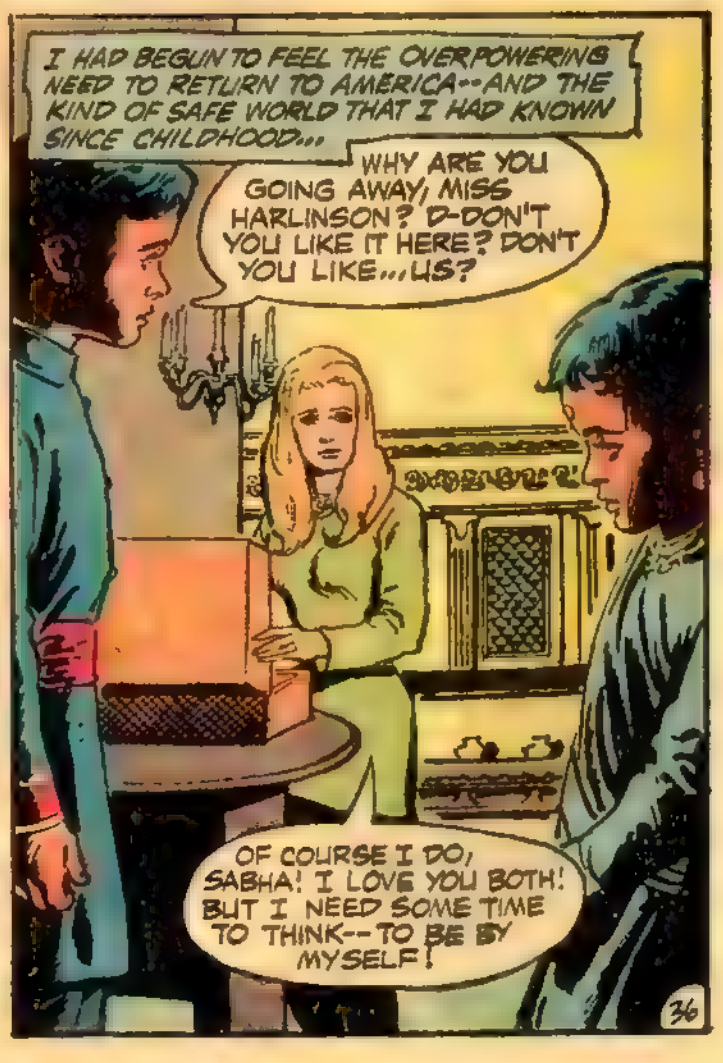
NOW I WAS MORE PUZZLED THAN EVER -- UNTIL RABIN STEPPED FORWARD AND PLACED HIS HAND ON BAKAR'S SHOULDER...
BAKAR IS MY CLOSE FRIEND, AND MOST LOYAL SERVANT! FROM THE DAY OF YOUR ARRIVAL HERE, HE HAS FOLLOWED YOU EVERYWHERE -- WATCHED OVER YOU LIKE A HAWK -- TO MAKE CERTAIN THAT NO HARM WOULD COME TO YOU! AND HE HAS DONE HIS JOB WELL!

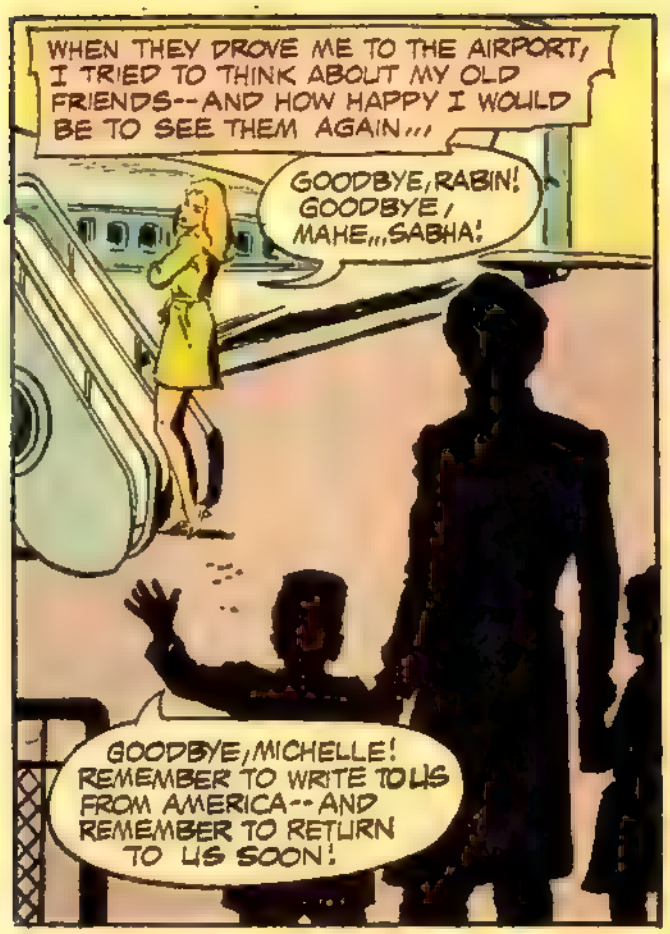
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE DRIVEN INTO THE DESERT, MISS HARLINSON! IT IS A TREACHEROUS PLACE, EVEN FOR AN INDIAN FORTUNATELY, I SAW THE DIRECTION YOU TOOK, AND YOU ACCIDENTALLY DROVE IN A LARGE CIRCLE--OTHERWISE I WOULD NEVER HAVE CAUGHT UP WITH YOU!
AFTER I HAD GOTTEN DRESSED, RABIN TOOK MY HAND AND LED ME THROUGH THE HOUSE TO THE STUDY...
...DON'T YOU SEE, MICHELLE? THE MAN WHO WAS SO CRASS WITH YOU IN THE STUDY WAS NOT ME AT ALL, BUT MY TWIN BROTHER JAWAH!
I-I WANT TO BELIEVE YOU, RABIN--BUT I'M SO...SO CONFUSED AND FRIGHTENED!
WE PAUSED IN THE DOORWAY, AND I GAZED WITH UNBELIEVING EYES INTO THE STUDY--NOW TRANSFORMED INTO A CHARRED CITADEL OF ARSON AND DEATH! THE STENCH OF DEATH HUNG LOW IN THE AIR, AND MINGLED WITH THE ACRID ODOR OF SCORCHED TILE AND SMOLDERING TIMBERS...
I ALMOST DIED IN THIS ROOM, MICHELLE! IT WAS HERE THAT JAWAH WAS KILLED BY THE VERY COBRA WITH WHICH HE MURDERED MY BROTHER SANIGN; AND IT WAS HERE THAT MY MOTHER GAVE HER LIFE TO ACHIEVE UNITY WITH THE DIVINE SPIRITS WHICH SHE WORSHIPPED SO FERVENTLY!
A WAVE OF SICKNESS AND NAUSEA WASHED OVER ME! THIS WAS ALL HAPPENING TOO FAST--I FELT CONFUSED...BEWILDERED...
I LOVE YOU, MICHELLE! I WANT YOU TO STAY HERE WITH ME, FOREVER!
I-I DON'T KNOW, RABIN! TAKE ME AWAY FROM HERE--PLEASE!
35

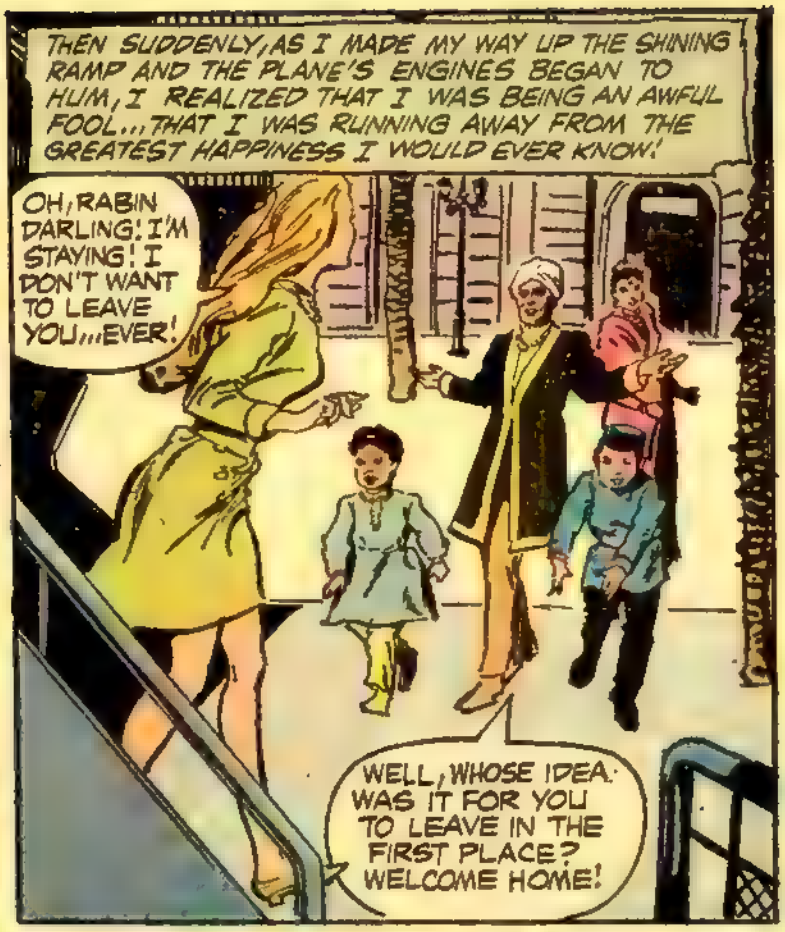

IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED, I STRUGGLED TO PLACE THE HORRIFYING AND COMPLEX EVENTS OF THE PAST FEW DAYS INTO A CLEAR PERSPECTIVE...
WILL MISS HARLINSON BE STAYING HERE WITH US, AUNTIE?
I DON'T KNOW, MAHE! WE WILL HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE!

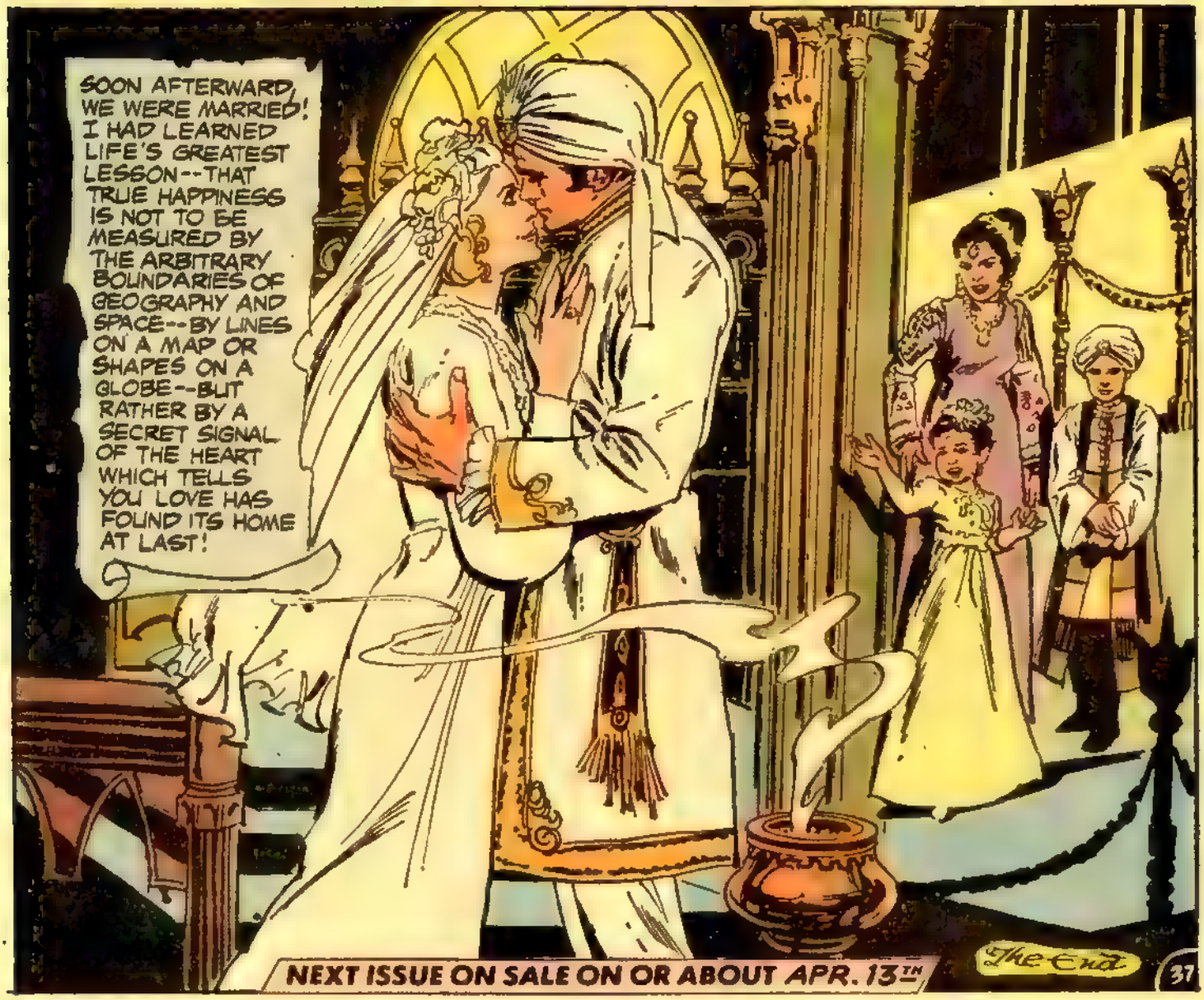
WE TOOK FREQUENT WALKS IN THE GARDEN, AND WHENEVER I WAS WITH HIM, MY HEART GREW LIGHTER AND THE MOON HELD A WARM GLOW...
I WANT YOU TO MARRY ME, MICHELLE! THE CHILDREN LOVE YOU... AND SO DO I!

I TRIED TO BE LIGHTHEARTED--BUT I CONTINUED TO BE TROUBLED BY HAUNTING FEARS...AND NAGGING DOUBTS...
I WANT TO GO HOME FOR AWHILE! I'M NOT SURE I COULD REALLY BE HAPPY HERE!
I-I UNDERSTAND, MICHELLE! TAKE WHATEVER TIME YOU NEED! I WILL BE HERE WAITING FOR YOU!


I HAD BEGUN TO FEEL THE OVERPOWERING NEED TO RETURN TO AMERICA--AND THE KIND OF SAFE WORLD THAT I HAD KNOWN SINCE CHILDHOOD...
WHY ARE YOU GOING AWAY, MISS HARLINSON? D-DON'T YOU LIKE IT HERE? DON'T YOU LIKE...US?
OF COURSE I DO, SABHA! I LOVE YOU BOTH! BUT I NEED SOME TIME TO THINK--TO BE BY MYSELF!


WHEN THEY DROVE ME TO THE AIRPORT, I TRIED TO THINK ABOUT MY OLD FRIENDS--AND HOW HAPPY I WOULD BE TO SEE THEM AGAIN...
GOODBYE, RABIN! GOODBYE, MAHE...SABHA!
GOODBYE, MICHELLE! REMEMBER TO WRITE TO US FROM AMERICA--AND REMEMBER TO RETURN TO US SOON!


THEN SUDDENLY, AS I MADE MY WAY UP THE SHINING RAMP AND THE PLANE'S ENGINES BEGAN TO HUM, I REALIZED THAT I WAS BEING AN AWFUL FOOL...THAT I WAS RUNNING AWAY FROM THE GREATEST HAPPINESS I WOULD EVER KNOW!
OH, RABIN DARLING! I'M STAYING! I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE YOU...EVER!
WELL, WHOSE IDEA WAS IT FOR YOU TO LEAVE IN THE FIRST PLACE? WELCOME HOME!


SOON AFTERWARD, WE WERE MARRIED! I HAD LEARNED LIFE'S GREATEST LESSON--THAT TRUE HAPPINESS IS NOT TO BE MEASURED BY THE ARBITRARY BOUNDARIES OF GEOGRAPHY AND SPACE--BY LINES ON A MAP OR SHAPES ON A GLOBE--BUT RATHER BY A SECRET SIGNAL OF THE HEART WHICH TELLS YOU LOVE HAS FOUND ITS HOME AT LAST!
The End

THE SINISTER MAILBOX

J-1601

Dear Editor:

National's two Gothic Novel books rank equally alongside Jack Kirby's "Fourth World" books as the most promising and original comics to unfold during 1971.

SINISTER HOUSE OF SECRET LOVE #2 has been the best of the Gothics thus far, particularly in the scripting department. For too long in the comics, deep characterization has been practically impossible due to the formulas the different types of comics were forced to adhere to. Super-hero comics are always filled with cover-to-cover action, and the supernatural comics are always totally dominated by the supernatural. This, when coupled with the page limitations, inevitably leave us with only stereotyped characters (of course, there have been exceptions—but not many). Not a single character in SINISTER #2 was stereotyped. All were rounded individuals, revealing within the story many sides, many moods, many aspects. A comic based on *drama*, not action (and because of this, whatever action there was was intensified tremendously). True, it was a little sugary, But I realize that it would be too risky (financially) if you were to abandon *all* formulas.

Tony's artwork was, as usual, superb.

I do not consider SINISTER #2 to have been a great comic. But it *was* a good comic, which whispered of exciting and better things to come within this new format. I can only hope that sales are good enough to warrant continued experimentation in this vein.

Bruce Long
Whittier, Calif.

Thanks for the kind words, Bruce. We hope subsequent issues have lived up to your expectations.

•••••

Mr. Orlando:

I knew it! I knew that Joe Orlando hadn't lost his once-mighty writing talent. SINISTER HOUSE #2 proved *that* beyond a shadow of a doubt. Whereas the first issue smacked of Dark Shadows and other overtly *melo*-dramatic programs, "To Wed The Devil" was interesting and exciting without insulting the reader's intelligence.

Of course with the talented persons of Len Wein and Tony DeZuniga (great artist, that man!), there could be little chance of anything *less* than quality. I particularly enjoyed the final three pages of the epic.

Quality picto-fiction has only been, thus far, found in the defunct EC line of graphics. Fortunately, this issue proved to be an exception to the usual rule—the blending of art with text had a pleasant quality to it—and I plead for more of the same in the future.

All in all, this 25 cent foray into gothic horror/mystery was well worth the quarter—and more. Your efforts show that DC's series of gothic horror/mystery may *not* be foredoomed to mediocrity!

Matt Graham
Granada Hills, Calif.

In issue #2 we featured a three page text epilogue to our book-length novel; the three page text in #3 was an independent gothic short story; This issue we have a letter column. We'd like to hear from you readers about which format you prefer—the epilogue, the short story, or the lettercol.

•••••

Dear Joe,

I'm glad to see that you've taken over as editor of THE SINISTER HOUSE OF SECRET LOVE. I hope you likewise take over its companion mag, THE DARK MANSION OF FORBIDDEN LOVE. It's not that I have anything against Dorothy Woolfolk—it's just that she seems to make these two books a bit too "female-oriented". You, however, if SINISTER HOUSE #2 is any indication, seem to put more emphasis on the mysterious, occult, evil, et al aspects of a gothic-type magazine. This is good because, while the use of "romance" will attract the female readers, playing up the "weird" aspect of the gothic story will make these two mags more appealing to the male comic buyer.

One other thing—If, as I've heard, SINISTER HOUSE and DARK MANSION are to have a two-story-per-issue format, how about putting a continued series in one or both of them? After seeing how successful "Dark Shadows" was, I would think such a series would meet with very favorable response—probably all the more so if it were to involve such Dark Shadows characters as vampires, werewolves, and similar types of characters.

Well, here's hoping DC's two new gothics prove to be smash hits.

Duffy Vohland
Clarksburg, Ind.

Afraid you've heard wrong, Duffy. Our plan for SINISTER HOUSE is to present a book-length "Graphic Novel Of Gothic Terror" in every issue.
As for the issue of female-oriented as opposed to male-oriented, we try to appeal to both audiences. We feel that Ms Woolfolk *is doing a great job on her gothic,* The Dark Mansion Of Forbidden Love!

We'd like to hear your opinions, pleasures and displeasures concerning this magazine. Please address all your comments to:THE SINISTER HOUSE OF SECRET LOVE, c/o National Periodical Publications, 909 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022

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D-13 ANACONDA

D-14 NO-NO

D-15 SMILIN' "DEVIL"

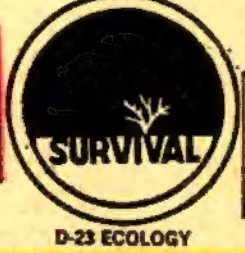
D-18 BLACK MAGIC STAR

D-19 MOSLEM MOON

D-20 PEACE ON EARTH

D-21 RAINBOW FISH

D-22 LOVE



D-23 ECOLOGY

D-24 AMERICAN FLAG

D-25 3 LITTLE BEES

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